

**KJV *vs.*
Methodists**
and the Church of the Nazarene



By David Michael Curtis

kindle

The Holy King James Bible *vs.* the Methodists and Church of the Nazarene



This eBook may be shared freely. Do not sell.
If you desire a copy in print, please use the link below.

© Copyright David Michael Curtis, All Rights Reserved
Arcadia Florida, United States of America, 34266

AVAILABLE ON KINDLE, AND IN PRINT ON [AMAZON.COM](https://www.amazon.com)

Download & share the **KJV vs.** series!

KJV *vs.*

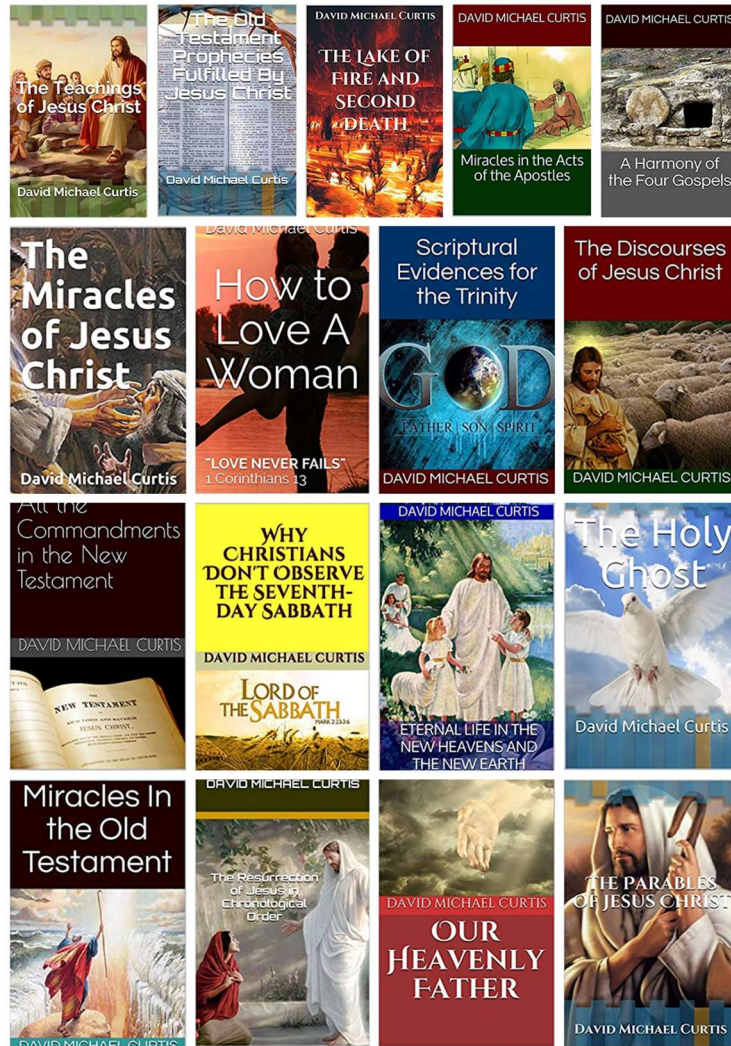


Located inside the eBooks folder:
/ **Topical Bible Studies (KJV)** / eBooks /

Download the complete **KJV vs.** series!

- ✓ KJV *vs.* Baptists
- ✓ KJV *vs.* Calvinism
- ✓ KJV *vs.* Catholicism
- ✓ KJV *vs.* Churches of Christ
 - ✓ KJV *vs.* Islam
 - ✓ KJV *vs.* JW
- ✓ KJV *vs.* Methodists
- ✓ KJV *vs.* Pentecostalism
- KJV *vs.* SDA

amazon books
By David Michael Curtis
On Kindle & in Print



<https://www.amazon.com/stores/David-Michael-Curtis/author/B08DQ8739N>



Free eBooks

By David Michael Curtis

<u>Mainstream Christianity</u>	<u>Roman Catholicism</u>
Apostasy, Sins unto Death Baptism Saves Christ, Titles & Worship of Church, One Universal Death—Immortal Souls Election & Predestination Eternal Life Evangelism Faith, Once Delivered False Prophets Forgiveness God, the Father God, the Holy Ghost God, the Son God, the Trinity Good Works, Salvation Through Hell—Eternal Fire Idolatry Marriage & Family Michael, & His Angels Musical Instruments Original Sin The Gospel of Jesus Christ The Law of God The Lord's Supper The Prayer Book of Scripture Promises The Second Coming of Christ The Seven-Year Tribulation & more....	Baptism Saves Church, Catholic-One Universal Death—Immortal Souls Election & Predestination Eternal Life Evangelism Faith, Once Delivered False Prophets Forgiveness God, the Father God, the Holy Ghost God, the Son God, the Trinity Good Works, Salvation Through Hell—Eternal Fire Marriage & Family Mass, Transubstantiation Michael, & His Angels Mortal Sins Musical Instruments Original Sin Prayer Book The Gospel of Jesus Christ The Law of God The Pope The Second Coming of Christ Venerating Saints Venerating Statues & more....

About the Author,

David Michael Curtis (1974-Present)



I am a sinner saved by God's grace. I have been baptized, and I confess that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. I trust in Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of my sins and the gift of eternal life.

I was born in Roseburg, Oregon. I became a Christian at age 19 in 1993. Over the next seven years, I wore out the bindings of eleven KJV Bibles. Using my own money, I conducted my first evangelistic crusade in 1999. I taught the Bible on the radio five days a week on K.O.R.E. Springfield, OR (2000-2002). I sold KJV Bibles and children's character-building books door to door in Washington, Oregon, California, Texas, Kansas, Georgia, Tennessee, and New York (1999-2007).

I was a volunteer chaplain for a maximum-security prison in Northern California (2005-2007).

Since 2001, I have owned/managed 75+ Christian websites. From 2008 to 2010, I was the General Manager for Harvestime Books (an international Christian publishing house). I have also served the church as an elder, a new believer's class teacher, and a vacation Bible school teacher.

A Helpful Illustration Describing this Topical Bible Study eBook

The tallest trees in the world are the Redwoods in Northern California. The Redwoods share a single network of roots; this root system connects **all** the Redwoods trees. This means the Redwoods Forest is also the largest single living organism in the world.

Imagine that each doctrine of the Bible is a giant Redwood tree supported by 30-40 roots (Bible verses). Examine the neighboring doctrines that share a root system (Bible verses) with that doctrine. Understand that under its surface, all the doctrines are connected by one massive root system within the Bible. My books *show how the various doctrines interconnect and share the same roots, supporting and depending on each other.*

My books use the Bible as its own interpreter, providing all the verses on whichever doctrine is being studied, topically arranged, without commentary. Christ is the only Teacher you need. He promised that you would know the truth, and the truth would set you free.

Table of Contents

Table of Contents	7
Who do you think you are? How Dare you write this book?	8
What is Justification?	13
What is Imputed Righteousness?	14
What is Infused Righteousness?	15
According to Roman Catholicism, how do Sacraments 'Merit Grace?'	16
What was the 'Holy Club' that John Wesley Helped Create at Oxford University?	17
What is the connection between the Church of the Nazarene and John Wesley?	18
According to the Church of the Nazarene, What is 'Entire Sanctification'?	19
According to Seventh-Day Adventists, WHAT is Sanctification?	20
Sanctified (<i>Present Tense</i>) through the Cross, Forever (<i>Future Tense</i>).	21
Grace is not Merited through Good Works.	25
All Have Sinned, None Doeth Good.....	34
God Justifies the Ungodly	38
The Atonement: Jesus Christ's Death on the Cross	42
Jesus Christ is the Only 'Entirely Sanctified' Good Person.	47
Seek the Righteousness of God in Christ Jesus, Not Your Own	50
Sins are Forgiven. They are not "Imputed" (Not Recorded).....	54
Unrepentant Sins that Result in Being Outside the City of God.	63
Institutional Church Denominations.	67
First Century House Churches.....	72
Your Adversary the Devil, as a Roaring Lion—Part 1.....	87
Your Adversary the Devil, as a Roaring Lion—Part 2.....	97
Fire Your Pastor, and Tell Him to Get a Job—Part 1	107
Fire Your Pastor, and Tell Him to Get a Job—Part 2	119
Good Works in First Century House Churches	129

Who do you think you are? How Dare you write this book?

Sadly, for 17 years, I was in a Christian cult: Four generations of my family have been members of the Seventh-Day Adventist church. Both sides of my family tree have built Seventh-Day Adventist churches. One is in Susanville, CA (built by Grandpa Curtis), and the other is in San Luis Obispo, CA (built by Grandpa Harper).

After discovering that my family's generational beliefs were unbiblical, I re-evaluated everything I believed forty hours a week for eighteen months. After 300+ Bible studies and writing articles for each of them, I renounced my membership in the Susanville, CA Seventh-Day Adventist church in 2011, where I had been ordained as an elder and where all my uncles and cousins had attended for decades.

I had formerly been taught to believe that the Seventh-Day Adventist church was the 'remnant church.' So, after 2011, I embarked on a decade-long search to find the 'real church.' I took this search seriously. My research into each denominational church led to shocking conclusions. Although each church, at its core, taught the gospel, and 99% of each church's teachings were wholesome and good, they also contained what the Bible warned as 'doctrines of devils.'

Everyone is aware of this problem, realizing there are doctrinal differences within the denominational churches. Still, they **dismiss them as secondary doctrines that are not salvational issues that should be overlooked**. In the name of unity, they preach, "Let's look past our differences and unite on Christ!"

Do not be deceived; there are no secondary doctrines. There is the truth, and there are counterfeits that the Bible calls 'doctrines of devils.' Jesus warned us to beware of false prophets and to beware of the leaven (the doctrines) of the religious leaders. Paul warned that a little leaven leavens the whole lump.

My decade-long journey of examining one church after another led me to conclude that each church had corrupt doctrines that rendered the gospel it professed to believe void. I treasure the gospel. My church had not taught it to me; I had to search for it for many years. I was not about to diminish the gospels' worth by passively sitting in a pew listening to ministers preach errors and condoning their teachings by paying them to preach them. I tried visiting several churches, but each time they taught things I knew were unbiblical, it drove me nuts; I couldn't listen to it.

I have written over six dozen topical Bible study eBooks, trying to convey what I have learned. All of them can be summarized in one sentence:

The only gospel that can save us on Judgment Day requires 1. faith, 2. repentance, and 3. baptism, and all denominational churches have divergent doctrines that undermine one or more of these three essential doctrines of the faith once delivered to the saints.

House churches are the only example of churches in the Bible.

Today, I do not identify with any church denomination. Why not? **House churches are the only example of churches in the Bible.** So, I will not be trying to convince you to jump out of one church denomination into another. I equally reject them all. Today, I'm a KJV Christian, nothing more and nothing less. This means my beliefs can be held accountable or challenged by anyone from any church, so long as they use the KJV Bible as their only evidence to try to persuade me.

But you must know the rules that I play by; otherwise, you won't be able to convince me to change my mind. So let me be more specific: Doctrinally speaking, I am a **Topical Bible Student** who uses the KJV Bible. In other words,

I must have all the verses on the topic before me and must-see harmony throughout all of those verses before reaching my conclusions.

So here are the rules:

1. No Appeals to Authority:

I do not care what the Watch Tower Society (Jehovah's Witnesses) teaches any more than I care about Ellen G. White (Seventh-day Adventists), Joseph Smith (Mormons), or the Pope (Roman Catholicism). I equally reject them all. I only regard the Holy KJV Bible as the Word of God. So, quoting anything outside the KJV Bible will be useless in terms of persuading me. Consider this a common sanctuary for us both because I will not use anything other than my KJV Bible to try to persuade you, too. The Protestant Reformation called this "Scripture Alone."

The over 700 topics explored within my books and documents available on the "[Topical Bible Studies \(KJV\)](#)" on **Google Drive** present **every scripture in the Bible on each topic**. As Christ's disciples, we must submit to the authority of the Holy Bible rather than to human authority when they are not in agreement. During Christ's temptation in the wilderness, Jesus said we must live by every word of God. Paul refers to this as putting on the full armor of God.

Before reaching any conclusions, we must examine all the verses on the topic and find harmony throughout them.

2. No either-or fallacies.

3. No cherry-picking.

The 'either-or logical fallacy' Pits One Doctrine Against Another.

Jehovah's Witnesses denial of Christ's deity pits Doctrine #1 against Doctrine #2

Doctrine #1: The Human Nature of Christ

Matthew 1:1-17; Romans 1:3-4; Hebrews 4:15; 1 Timothy 2:5; Hebrews 2:17; Galatians 4:4-5; 1 Corinthians 15:21; Romans 6:15,19; Matthew 1:18; Luke 1:31; Matthew 1:16; 2:2; Luke 2:7,11; John 1:14; Hebrews 2:14; Matthew 26:38; Luke 23:46; Acts 2:31; Luke 2:21,52; 19:41; John 11:35; Matthew 4:2; 21:18; John 4:7; 19:28; Matthew 8:24; Mark 4:38; John 4:6; Isaiah 53:3-4; Matthew 26:67; Luke 22:64; 23:11; Matthew 27:26; John 19:1; Psalm 22:16; Luke 23:33; John 19:30,34; Matthew 27:59-60; Acts 3:15; 2 Timothy 2:8; Acts 3:22; Philippians 2:7-8; Hebrews 7:26,28; 1 John 3:5; 1 Peter 2:22; Hebrews 4:15; John 18:38; 8:46; Luke 24:39; John 20:27; 1 John 1:1-2; Genesis 3:15; Isaiah 7:14; Jeremiah 31:22; Luke 1:31; Galatians 4:4; Genesis 22:18; Galatians 3:16; Hebrews 2:16; 2 Samuel 7:12,16; Mark 10:47; Acts 2:30; 13:23; Romans 1:3; Matthew 8:20; 16:13; John 4:2; Mark 6:3; John 7:27; 19:5; Acts 2:22; 1 John 4:3; 2 John 7

Doctrine #2: Jesus Christ is the LORD (JEHOVAH)

Exodus 3:14; Mark 6:50; John 6:20; 8:58,24,28; 9:9; 13:19; 18:5-6,8; Isaiah 40:3; Matthew 3:3; Psalm 24:7,10; 1 Corinthians 2:8; James 2:1; Jeremiah 23:5-6; 1 Corinthians 1:30; Psalm 97:9; John 3:31; Isaiah 41:4; 44:6; 48:12-13; Revelation 1:8,11,17; 22:13; Zechariah 13:7; Philippians 2:6; Isaiah 6:1-3; John 12:41; Isaiah 8:13-14; Romans 9:33; 1 Peter 2:8; Psalm 23:1; John 10:11,14; Isaiah 40:11; Hebrews 13:20; Proverbs 16:4; Colossians 1:16; Malachi 3:1; Mark 1:2; Luke 2:27; Hebrews 8:6; Isaiah 9:6; Joel 2:32; Acts 2:21; 1 Corinthians 1:2; 12:3; Romans 10:9-13; Psalm 102:24-27; Hebrews 1:8,10-12; Hosea 1:7; Titus 2:13; Isaiah 43:3,11; 45:21; 49:26; 60:16; Hosea 13:4; Luke 2:11; Philippians 3:20; Psalm 45:6-7; Jeremiah 10:10; 1 John 5:20; John 1:1; Ecclesiastes 12:14; 1 Corinthians 4:5; 2 Corinthians 5:10; 2 Timothy 4:1; Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:23; 1 Timothy 6:15; Revelation 1:5; 17:14; 19:16; 1 Samuel 2:2; Acts 3:14; 1 Corinthians 15:47; Genesis 2:3; Matthew 12:8; Acts 10:36; Romans 10:11-13; Matthew 26:63-67; John 1:14; 3:16,18; 1 John 4:9; Acts 20:28; John 10:30; 12:45; 14:7-10; 17:10; 14:16; 15:26; 5:23; 16:15; 5:17; 1 Thessalonians 3:11; 2 Thessalonians 2:16-17; Proverbs 30:4; Matthew 11:27; Isaiah 40:28; John 1:3; Colossians 1:16; Hebrews 1:2; Nehemiah 9:6; Colossians 1:17; Hebrews 1:3; Colossians 2:9; Hebrews 1:3; John 5:21; 6:40,54; 2:19; 10:18; Isaiah 9:6; Micah 5:2; John 1:1; Colossians 1:17; Hebrews 1:8-10; Revelation 1:8; Matthew 18:20; 28:20; John 3:13; Psalm 45:3; Philippians 3:21; Revelation 1:8; John 16:30; 21:17; 1 Kings 8:39; Luke 5:22; Ezekiel 11:5; John 2:24-25; Malachi 3:6; Hebrews 1:12; 13:8; Colossians 3:13; Mark 2:7,10; Jeremiah 3:15; Ephesians 4:11-13; Isaiah 54:5; Ephesians 5:25-32; Isaiah 62:5; Revelation 21:2,9; Acts 7:59; 2 Corinthians 12:8-9; Psalm 2:12; 1 Peter 2:6; Jeremiah 17:5,7; Revelation 5:9; Titus 2:14; Ephesians 5:27; Jude 24-25; Romans 6:11; Galatians 2:19; 2 Corinthians 5:15; John 20:28; Genesis 17:1; 48:15; 32:24-30; Hosea 12:3-5; Judges 6:22-24; 13:21-22

All Christians affirm the human nature of Christ and always have acknowledged the human nature of Christ. So, imagine a team of Jehovah's Witnesses in my living room, turning the pages of their fake New World Translation bibles and encouraging me to look at each of them. Well, my response to each verse is Amen! I believe the verses the Jehovah's Witnesses desperately want to bring to my attention. Why? **I affirm that Christ was 100% human! Amen!**

However, the humanity of Christ does not cancel or make void everything else the Bible teaches about Christ. Such an absurd conclusion, asserted by the Jehovah's Witnesses, is an 'either-or logical fallacy.' It's a clever trick used by Jehovah's Witnesses from house to house for more than a century, but that is all that it is. It is a magician's trick.

It is not truly a Bible study. Rather, it is a method used to trick you into doubting what the Bible says about the other doctrines concerning Christ. I remind the reader that unbelief in Christ will cause you to forfeit eternal life. This book will present every verse on the various topics it presents. This is not an either-or scenario. *We must believe everything the Bible teaches.* **Do not try to interpret the Bible; rather, read the Holy Bible like a child, with the goal of believing everything it says.**

Cherry Picking Fallacy, the Fallacy of Incomplete Evidence.

The **Cherry Picking Fallacy**, also known as the **fallacy of incomplete evidence**, occurs when someone selectively presents individual cases or data that seem to confirm a particular position while **ignoring** a significant portion of related and similar cases or data that may **contradict** that position. Below is an example of the **Cherry Picking Fallacy**,

A very popular belief in Christianity is based on Incomplete Evidence.

2 Corinthians 5:6-8; Philippians 1:23; Luke 16:22-24; 23:43

Here are all the verses in the Bible on the same topic.

Genesis 2:7; 3:4; 25:8; Exodus 7:11; Deuteronomy 31:16; 1 Samuel 28:3-25; 1 Kings 2:10; 11:21,43; 14:20,31; 15:8,24; 16:6,28; 22:40,50; 2 Kings 8:24; 10:35; 13:9,13; 14:16,21-22,29; 15:7,22,38; 16:20; 20:21; 21:18; 24:6; Job 4:17; 14:12,21; 17:13; 27:3; Psalm 115:17; 146:4; Ecclesiastes 9:5-6,10; 12:7; Ezekiel 18:20; Daniel 2:2; Matthew 9:24-25; 13:43; 22:30; Mark 5:39-42; 12:25; Luke 8:49-56; 20:36; John 5:28-29; 11:11-14,23,26-27,34,39,43-44; 20:17; Acts 2:29,34; 5:2,29; 16:16-18; 1 Corinthians 15:3-4,50-55; 2 Corinthians 5:1-8; Philippians 1:21-24; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; 1 Timothy 6:15-16; 2 Timothy 4:6-8; James 2:26; 2 Peter 3:10; 1 John 3:2; Revelation 12:9; 16:3,14; 21:4; 22:12

It's the Holy Spirit's job to persuade.

It's the Holy Spirit's job to persuade. It's my job to present the case from Scripture. Work out your salvation with fear and trembling. If you choose to stop reading at this point, then I will kick the dust off my feet as a testimony against you on the day of Judgment. Sound harsh? This isn't a game. The Bible is a sharp two-edged sword. It divides everyone into two camps: the saved and the lost.

Jesus of the Holy Bible is the most loving person in human history, but he is also the most terrifying. Which do you want to meet with on the Great Day of God almighty? If you want His salvation and eternal life, you must believe in Him. The Holy Spirit will help you believe in him. Are you asking, "What must I do to be saved?"

Call out in the name of Jesus and confess that Jesus is the LORD.

God has people in every denominational church.

I believe God has people in the Roman Catholic, Seventh-day Adventist, Baptist, Methodist, and Pentecostal churches. Over the years, I have met some very good people who genuinely loved God and others in each of these churches who made very big impacts on my life.

My books examine these churches' doctrines, **not** the people who believe in them.

I was in a cult for 17 years. I know firsthand what it's like to believe a lie strongly. I am writing this book because if I were in a denominational church that has a mixture of sound doctrine and doctrines of devils and couldn't distinguish which were which, I would wish someone would have written this book for me. Starting on this page, it's between the Holy KJV Bible, you, and God. I hope we meet in the New Jerusalem.

Sincerely,

David Michael Curtis

What is Justification?

According to Martin Luther, justification is the act of God declaring a sinner righteous through faith in Jesus Christ. It is a central doctrine in Lutheran theology and played a crucial role in the Protestant Reformation.

Here are the key aspects of justification according to Luther:

- **Sola Fide (Faith Alone):** Luther emphasized that justification is received through faith alone, not through good works or adherence to the law. Faith is the trust in Christ's atoning sacrifice as the sole basis for forgiveness and acceptance before God.
- **Sola Gratia (Grace Alone):** Justification is entirely a gift of God's grace, not something earned or merited by human effort. It is an act of God's undeserved favor towards sinners.
- **Alien Righteousness:** The righteousness that justifies the sinner is not their own but is the righteousness of Christ, imputed or credited to the believer through faith. This is often called "alien righteousness" because it comes from outside the believer.
- **Forensic Declaration:** Justification is not a process of moral transformation but a legal declaration by God. God declares the sinner "not guilty" and righteous because of Christ's perfect obedience and sacrificial death on their behalf.
- **Assurance of Salvation:** Justification provides the believer with assurance of their salvation and freedom from the fear of condemnation. It is based on God's promise and faithfulness, not on the believer's own fluctuating feelings or actions.

Luther's understanding of justification differed significantly from the prevailing Catholic view of his time, which emphasized a combination of faith and works, along with the infusion of grace through the sacraments. Luther's emphasis on faith alone and the imputation of Christ's righteousness led to a major theological break with the Catholic Church and sparked the Protestant Reformation.

For Luther, justification by faith alone was not just a theological concept but a deeply personal and liberating truth. It meant that salvation was not based on human effort but on God's grace, freely offered to all who trust in Christ. This understanding brought him great comfort and assurance in his own faith journey.

What is Imputed Righteousness?

According to Martin Luther, imputed righteousness is the core doctrine of justification, the process by which a sinner is declared righteous by God. Luther believed that this righteousness is not inherent in the person but is the righteousness of Christ Himself, credited to the believer through faith alone.

Here are the key aspects of imputed righteousness according to Luther:

- **Alien Righteousness:** Luther referred to it as "alien righteousness" because it is not our own but belongs to Christ.
- **Faith Alone:** This righteousness is received solely through faith in Christ's atoning sacrifice, not through good works or adherence to the law.
- **Legal Declaration:** Justification is a legal declaration by God, not a process of moral transformation. It's like a judge declaring a guilty defendant "not guilty" based on someone else paying their fine.
- **Double Imputation:** This involves both the imputation of our sins to Christ and the imputation of Christ's righteousness to us. This "exchange" occurs at the moment of faith, repentance, and baptism.
- **Comfort for the Believer:** Imputed righteousness provides assurance of salvation and freedom from the fear of condemnation.

Luther's emphasis on imputed righteousness was a central point of contention with the Catholic Church, which emphasized infused righteousness, a gradual process of becoming righteous through God's grace working within the believer. Luther argued that this view placed too much emphasis on human effort and obscured the centrality of Christ's work in salvation.

For Luther, imputed righteousness was not just a theological concept but a source of profound comfort and assurance for the believer. It meant that even though we are sinners, we can stand before God clothed in Christ's perfect righteousness, confident of our salvation.

What is Infused Righteousness?

Infused righteousness is a theological concept primarily associated with the Roman Catholic Church. It refers to the process by which God's grace is "infused" into the believer, transforming them and making them more righteous over time. This occurs through participation in sacraments, prayer, and acts of charity, among other things.

Key points about infused righteousness:

- **Gradual Process:** It's not a one-time event but a lifelong journey of growth in holiness.
- **Cooperation with Grace:** Believers are active participants in this process, cooperating with God's grace through their actions.
- **Transformation:** The goal is not just to be declared righteous but to actually become more righteous within oneself.
- **Role of Sacraments:** The sacraments play a crucial role in infusing grace and facilitating this transformation.

It's important to contrast infused righteousness with the Protestant concept of imputed righteousness:

- **Imputed Righteousness:** This is the belief that God declares a sinner righteous based on their faith in Christ alone. The righteousness of Christ is imputed, or credited, to the believer rather than infused into them.

While the Catholic Church also affirms the importance of faith and Christ's sacrifice, it emphasizes the ongoing process of becoming more righteous through God's grace working within the believer. This is where the concept of infused righteousness comes in.

If you'd like to delve deeper into this topic, here are some resources you might find helpful:

- **Infused righteousness - Wikipedia:** https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Infused_righteousness
- **Imputed versus Infused Righteousness | Catholic Answers Podcasts:** <https://www.catholic.com/audio/ddp/imputed-versus-infused-righteousness>

According to Roman Catholicism, how do Sacraments 'Merit Grace'?

In Roman Catholicism, the concept of "meriting grace" through the sacraments is nuanced and often misunderstood. It's important to understand the distinction between two types of merit:

- **Condign Merit:** This refers to a true claim to a reward based on a just and proportionate exchange. Only Christ's perfect sacrifice on the cross has condign merit, earning us salvation.
- **Congruent Merit:** This refers to a lesser form of merit, where God chooses to reward good actions done in a state of grace. It is not a claim or entitlement, but rather a gift from God's generosity.

Here's how Catholics understand the role of the sacraments in relation to grace and merit:

1. **Sacraments as Channels of Grace:** The sacraments are not merely symbolic rituals, but encounters with Christ himself. They are privileged channels through which God's grace is poured out into the believer's soul.
2. **Grace as the Source of Merit:** Any meritorious actions a Catholic performs are only possible because of God's grace working within them. Grace is the necessary condition for merit, not the other way around.
3. **Cooperation with Grace:** While grace is a free gift, Catholics are called to actively cooperate with it through faith, good works, and participation in the sacraments. This cooperation is not about earning salvation, but about responding to God's love and growing in holiness.
4. **Merit as a Reward, Not a Wage:** Any rewards or graces received through the sacraments are ultimately gifts from God, not something earned through human effort. The concept of congruent merit highlights God's generosity in responding to our cooperation with His grace.
5. **Focus on Christ, Not on Self:** The ultimate goal of participating in the sacraments and living a life of faith is not to accumulate merit, but to deepen one's relationship with Christ and become more like Him.

It's important to note that the Catholic Church strongly affirms that salvation is entirely by God's grace, not by human merit. The sacraments are not a means to manipulate God or earn salvation, but a way to encounter Christ and receive His transformative grace.

What was the 'Holy Club' that John Wesley Helped Create at Oxford University?

The "Holy Club" was a small group formed at Oxford University in 1729 by John Wesley and his brother Charles, along with a few other students. They met regularly for Bible study, prayer, spiritual reflection, and acts of charity. The group was dedicated to living a disciplined and holy life, and they sought to deepen their faith through methodical practices such as fasting, visiting the sick and imprisoned, and studying the Bible in its original languages.

Due to their strict adherence to a methodical approach to religious practice and their dedication to personal holiness, other students sometimes mocked them and nicknamed them the "Methodists." However, the Holy Club, though small, was instrumental in laying the groundwork for the Methodist movement, which John Wesley would later lead.

Key features of the Holy Club:

- **Focus on spiritual disciplines:** Members engaged in regular Bible study, prayer, fasting, and self-examination.
- **Emphasis on acts of charity:** They visited the sick and imprisoned and provided financial assistance to the poor.
- **Methodist approach:** Their methodical approach to religious practice earned them the nickname "Methodists."

Though it was not an official society, the Holy Club had a profound impact on John Wesley's life and ministry, and its legacy can be seen in the Methodist movement that emerged from it.

You can find more information about the Holy Club here:

- **Holy Club - Wikipedia:** https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Holy_Club
- **The Holy Club | Christian History:** <https://www.christianitytoday.com/history/issues/issue-2/holy-club.html>

What is the connection between the Church of the Nazarene and John Wesley?

The Church of the Nazarene is deeply rooted in the teachings of John Wesley, the founder of Methodism. As part of the Wesleyan-Holiness tradition, the Nazarene denomination is a direct descendant of Wesley's theological teachings and emphasis on holy living. This strong connection to Wesley's legacy is a defining feature of the Church of the Nazarene.

Here are some key connections between the Church of the Nazarene and John Wesley:

- **Theology:** Nazarene theology is heavily influenced by Wesley's teachings, particularly his emphasis on the importance of personal holiness and the possibility of a life fully dedicated to God through the power of the Holy Spirit.
- **Entire Sanctification:** Like Wesley, Nazarenes believe in the doctrine of entire sanctification, a second work of grace that cleanses the heart from sin's power and fills the believer with perfect love for God and others.
- **Scripture and Tradition:** Both Wesley and the Church of the Nazarene uphold the importance of Scripture as the primary source of authority for faith and practice, while also valuing the role of tradition and experience in Christian life.
- **Social Holiness:** Wesley's emphasis on social holiness, which involves seeking justice and serving others, is reflected in the Nazarene commitment to compassion and social action.

While the Church of the Nazarene developed independently of the Methodist Church, it draws heavily from Wesley's theological and spiritual heritage. The denomination sees itself as continuing the Wesleyan tradition of emphasizing personal holiness, social justice, and the transformative power of the Holy Spirit.

You can find more information about the connection between the Church of the Nazarene and John Wesley here:

- **Nazarenes And the Wesleyan Mission - USA-Canada Region:** <https://www.usacanadaregion.org/sites/usacanadaregion.org/files/PDF/Books/Nazarenes-and-the-Wesleyan-Mission.pdf>
- **Our history -- Church of the Nazarene:** <https://home.snu.edu/~hculbert/nhistory.htm>

According to the Church of the Nazarene, What is 'Entire Sanctification'?

The Church of the Nazarene views sanctification as a distinct work of grace subsequent to salvation. In it, a believer is cleansed from the inborn tendency toward sin and filled with perfect love for God and neighbor. It is not sinless perfection but rather the empowering of the believer to love God with their whole heart, soul, mind, and strength and their neighbor as themselves.

Key points about the entire sanctification of the Church of the Nazarene:

- **Second Work of Grace:** It is distinct from conversion and is often referred to as a second blessing or baptism of the Holy Spirit.
- **Cleansing and Empowering:** It cleanses the heart from sin's power and empowers us to live a life of holy love.
- **Perfect Love:** It results in a life marked by perfect love for God and others, not in absolute sinlessness.
- **Process and Crisis:** It is both *a gradual process of growth in grace* and *a definite crisis experience of full surrender to God*.

It is important to note that while entire sanctification is a core doctrine of the Church of the Nazarene, there can be various understandings and experiences of it within the denomination. However, the core belief is that it is a transformative work of God's grace that empowers believers to live a Christlike life of love and holiness.

For further information, you can refer to the following resources:

- **Holiness and Perfect Love:** https://nnu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/holiness_and_perfect_love.pdf
- **So Just what is "Entire Sanctification"?:** <https://asiapacificnazarene.org/so-just-what-is-entire-sanctification/>
- **Entire Sanctification | Church of the Nazarene:** <https://ichurchofthenazarene.com/category/entire-sanctification/>

THE CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE'S DOCTRINE OF 'ENTIRE SANCTIFICATION' CONCEPT IS AN EXPRESSION OF **INFUSED RIGHTEOUSNESS**, WHICH STANDS IN DIRECT OPPOSITION TO MARTIN LUTHER'S UNDERSTANDING OF **JUSTIFICATION** THROUGH CHRIST'S **IMPUTED RIGHTEOUSNESS** EXCLUSIVELY THROUGH FAITH IN CHRIST'S DEATH ON THE CROSS.

According to Seventh-Day Adventists, WHAT is Sanctification?

According to Ellen G. White, what is Sanctification?

WARNING. THE FOLLOWING QUOTE WAS WRITTEN BY A FALSE PROPHET:

“Sanctification is not the work of a moment, an hour, a day, but of a lifetime. It is not gained by a happy flight of feeling, but is the result of constantly dying to sin, and constantly living for Christ. **Wrongs cannot be righted, nor reformations wrought in the character by feeble, intermittent efforts. It is only by long, persevering effort, sore discipline, and stern conflict,** that we shall overcome.” Ellen G. White, The Acts of the Apostles, p. 560.

Seventh-day Adventists do not believe that observing the Sabbath alone sanctifies them. They believe that **sanctification is a process** of growing in holiness and becoming more Christlike through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Observing the Sabbath plays a significant role in their understanding of sanctification:

- **Sign of Sanctification:** The Sabbath is seen as a sign or symbol of **the sanctification process**, representing God's work in their lives to make them holy.
- **Time for Spiritual Growth:** The Sabbath provides a dedicated time for worship, prayer, study, and fellowship, which are essential for spiritual growth and transformation.
- **Reminder of God's Power:** By remembering the Sabbath, Adventists acknowledge God as the Creator and Redeemer and rely on His power for sanctification.
- **Foretaste of Heaven:** The peace and joy experienced during Sabbath observance are seen as a foretaste of the eternal rest and fellowship with God in heaven.

While keeping the Sabbath doesn't automatically make someone holy, it is considered a vital part of **the sanctification process** for Seventh-day Adventists. It's a time to connect with God, reflect on His goodness, and receive the spiritual nourishment needed to grow in faith and love.

THE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST ‘**SANCTIFICATION PROCESS**’ CONCEPT IS AN EXPRESSION OF **INFUSED RIGHTEOUSNESS**, WHICH STANDS IN DIRECT OPPOSITION TO MARTIN LUTHER'S UNDERSTANDING OF **JUSTIFICATION** THROUGH CHRIST'S **IMPUTED RIGHTEOUSNESS** EXCLUSIVELY THROUGH FAITH IN CHRIST'S DEATH ON THE CROSS.

Sanctified (*Present Tense*) through the Cross, Forever (*Future Tense*).

We are (present tense) sanctified through the cross, once for all (forever, future tense).

Hebrews 10:10. By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

Revelation 12:11. and they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.

“They overcame by the blood of the Lamb,” not through *“sore discipline” and sheer willpower.*

1 John 5:4. For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.

John 1:12-13. But as many as received him, **TO THEM GAVE HE POWER** to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: **Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, BUT OF GOD.**

Them which are sanctified (present tense).

Acts 20:32. and now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all **them which are sanctified.**

Among them which are sanctified (present tense) by faith that is in me.

Acts 26:18. To open their eyes, and to turn *them* from darkness to light, and *from* the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance **among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.**

Being sanctified (present tense) by the Holy Ghost

Romans 15:16. That I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, **that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost.**

Them that are sanctified (present tense) in Christ Jesus

1 Corinthians 1:2. Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours:

Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us sanctification (present tense).

1 Corinthians 1:30. But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption:

Ye are sanctified (present tense), in the name of the Lord Jesus.

1 Corinthians 6:11. and such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.

The unbelieving husband is sanctified (present tense) by the wife.

1 Corinthians 7:14. For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: else were your children unclean; but now are they holy.

That he might sanctify it (present tense), by the word.

Ephesians 5:26. That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word,

This is the will of God, even your sanctification (present tense).

1 Thessalonians 4:3-4. For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication: That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour;

The very God of peace sanctify you (present tense) wholly.

1 Thessalonians 5:23. and the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

God hath chosen you to salvation through sanctification (present tense).

2 Thessalonians 2:13. But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth:

It (our meat, food) is sanctified by the word of God.

1 Timothy 4:5. For it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.

2 Timothy 2:21. If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, *and* prepared unto every good work.

He that sanctifieth (present tense) and they who are sanctified (present tense) are all of one.

Hebrews 2:11. For both **he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one**: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren,

Hebrews 9:13. For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh:

We are sanctified (present tense) through the cross, once for all (forever, future tense).

Hebrews 10:10. By the which will **we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.**

Perfected (present tense) for ever (future tense) them that are sanctified (present tense).

Hebrews 10:14. For **by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.**

The blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified (past tense).

Hebrews 10:29. Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted **the blood of the covenant, wherewith he**

was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?

That he might sanctify (present tense) the people with his own blood.

Hebrews 13:12. Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate.

Through sanctification (present tense) of the Spirit.

1 Peter 1:2. Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied.

Sanctify (present tense) the Lord God in your hearts.

1 Peter 3:15. But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and *be* ready always to *give* an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear:

Sanctified (present tense) by the Father and preserved (future tense) in Jesus Christ.

Jude 1. Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, *and* called:

He that is holy (present tense), let him be holy still (future tense).

Revelation 22:11. He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still.

Grace is not Merited through Good Works.

Trusting in Religious Works for Salvation Makes Void the Gospel.

Obedience to “Obsolete Commandments,” “Beguiles you of your Reward.”

Colossians 2:12-17. Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with *him* through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. and you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; and having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it. Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath *days*: Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body *is* of Christ.

Colossians 2:18-23. Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, and not holding the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God. Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances, (Touch not; taste not; handle not; Which all are to perish with the using;) after the commandments and doctrines of men? Which things have indeed a shew of wisdom in will worship, and humility, and neglecting of the body; not in any honour to the satisfying of the flesh.

The Gentiles were Alienated from the Jews by the Law of Moses.

Ephesians 2:12. That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world:

By the Blood of Christ, Jesus hath Broken Down the Middle Wall of Partition.

Ephesians 2:13-14. But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition *between us*;

The Religious Ordinances, and Works of the Law of Moses, Have Been Abolished.

Ephesians 2:15. Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, *even* the law of commandments *contained* in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace;:

Man Has Access to God, by Christ's Death, and not by Religious Works.

Ephesians 2:16-19. and that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: and came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father. Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God;

Men are Saved by Grace through Faith; not by Observing Religious Works.

Ephesians 2:8-10 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: *it is* the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

Man Cannot Be Justified by the Law of Moses.

Acts 13:39. and by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.

The Law Given That All the World May Become Guilty Before God.

Romans 3:19-20. Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: **that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.** Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for **by the law is the knowledge of sin.**

Man Is Justified by Faith Without The Deeds of the Law.

Romans 3:27-28. Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay: but by the law of faith. Therefore we conclude that **a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.**

The Promise was not Through the Law.

Romans 4:13-16. For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. For if they which are of the law

be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect: Because the law worketh wrath: for where no law is, there is no transgression. Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all,

Ye Are Not Under the Law, But Under Grace.

Romans 6:14. For sin shall not have dominion over you: **for ye are not under the law, but under grace.**

Ye Are Dead to the Law by the Death of Christ.

Romans 7:1-5. Know ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth? For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, **she is loosed from the law** of her husband. So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, **she is free from that law**; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man. Wherefore, my brethren, **ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ**; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God. For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death.

We Are Delivered From the Law.

Romans 7:6-7. But now **we are delivered from the law**, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and **not in the oldness of the letter**. What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, **Thou shalt not covet**.

The Law of Moses Cannot Accuse or Condemn Those in Christ.

Romans 8:1-4. There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

John 5:45. Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father: there is *one* that accuseth you, *even* Moses, in whom ye trust.

Israel Sought to be Justified by the Works of the Law.

Romans 9:31-32. But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness. Wherefore? Because **they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law.** For they stumbled at that stumblingstone;

Christ is the End of the Law.

Romans 10:4. For **Christ is the end of the law** for righteousness to every one that believeth.

Only Perfect Obedience to the Whole Law Can Justify You by the Law.

Romans 10:5. For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, That the man which doeth those things shall live by them.

Galatians 3:10-13. For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them. But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith. and the law is not of faith: but, The man that doeth them shall live in them. Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree:

Galatians 4:21. Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law?

Galatians 5:3-4. For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that **he is a debtor to do the whole law.** Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace.

James 2:10-11. For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one *point*, he is guilty of all. For he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law.

By the Works of the Law Shall No Flesh Be Justified.

Galatians 2:16. Knowing that **a man is not justified by the works of the law**, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and **not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.**

I Am Dead to the Law.

Galatians 2:19. For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God.

I Do Not Frustrate the Grace of God.

Galatians 2:21. I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.

No One Receives the Spirit by the Works of the Law.

Galatians 3:2. This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?

Galatians 3:5. He therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, doeth he it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?

The Law Cannot Disannul the Promise.

Galatians 3:17-19. And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect. For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise: but God gave it to Abraham by promise. Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator.

Righteousness Is Not by the Law.

Galatians 3:21. Is the law then against the promises of God? God forbid: for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law.

The Law Was Our Schoolmaster to Bring Us unto Christ.

Galatians 3:23-24. But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

Christ Came to Redeem Those That Were Under the Law.

Galatians 4:4-5. But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.

If Ye Be Led of the Spirit, Ye Are Not Under the Law.

Galatians 5:18. But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law.

No One Is Able to Keep the Law.

Galatians 6:13. For neither they themselves who are circumcised keep the law; but desire to have you circumcised, that they may glory in your flesh.

John 7:19. Did not Moses give you the law, and yet none of you keepeth the law? Why go ye about to kill me?

The Law of Commandments Has Been Abolished.

Ephesians 2:15. Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace;

The Law Made Nothing Perfect.

Hebrews 7:19. For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did; by the which we draw nigh unto God.

Let No Man Beguile You of Your Reward.

Colossians 2:13-20. and you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; and having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it. Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ. Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, and not holding the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God. Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances,

How Turn Ye Again... to be In Bondage?

Galatians 4:8-11 Howbeit then, when ye knew not God, ye did service unto them which by nature are no gods. But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, **how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage? Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years.** I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain.

Lord, Lord, Have We Not Done Many Wonderful Works?

Matthew 7:21-23. Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? and then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

Galatians 2:21. I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness *come* by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.

John 3:18. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

John 6:40. and this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.

Making the Word of God of None Effect through Tradition.

Note. A hypocrite is “an actor.”

Mark 7:6-9. He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you *hypocrites*, as it is written, This people honoureth me with *their* lips, but their heart is far from me. Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching *for* doctrines the commandments of men. For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, *as* the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do. and he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition.

Mark 7:13. Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered: and many such like things do ye.

Matthew 23:25-28. Woe unto you, scribes and *Pharisees, hypocrites!* for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess. *Thou* blind Pharisee, *cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also.* Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead *men's* bones, and of all uncleanness. Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.

Galatians 2:16. Knowing that **a man is not justified by the works of the law**, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and **not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.**

Romans 5:1. Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:

Conclusion.

John 6:29. Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.

1 John 3:23. and this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment.

Not By Works of Righteousness Which We Have Done.

Titus 3:5. Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;

Not of works, lest any man should boast.

Ephesians 2:8-9. For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: *it is* the gift of God: **Not of works, lest any man should boast.**

Romans 4:2. For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath *whereof* to glory; but not before God.

Romans 9:11. (For *the children* being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;)

Romans 9:16. So then *it is* not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy.

Romans 11:6. and if by grace, then *is it* no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if *it be* of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work.

1 Corinthians 1:29-31. **That no flesh should glory in his presence.** But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: That, according as it is written, **He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.**

2 Timothy 1:9. Who hath saved us, and called *us* with an holy calling, **not according to our works,** but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began,

Titus 3:3-5. For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, *and* hating one another. But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, **Not by works of righteousness which**

we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;

By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified.

Romans 3:20. Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law *is* the knowledge of sin.

Romans 3:27-28. Where *is* boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay: but by the law of faith. Therefore we conclude that **a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.**

Galatians 2:16. Knowing that **a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ**, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.

God justifies through Faith.

Galatians 3:8. and the scripture, foreseeing that **God would justify** the heathen **through faith**, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, *saying*, In thee shall all nations be blessed.

Galatians 3:26. For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.

The Hand of the LORD Hath Done This.

Isaiah 41:20. That they may see, and know, and consider, and understand together, that **the hand of the LORD hath done this**, and the Holy One of Israel hath created it.

Psalms 111:2. The works of the LORD *are* great, sought out of all them that have pleasure therein.

All Have Sinned, None Doeth Good

Flesh And Blood Cannot Inherit the Kingdom of God

1 Corinthians 15:50 Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.

The Carnal Mind is not Subject to the Law of God

Romans 8:7 Because the carnal mind *is* enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.

They That Are in the Flesh Cannot Please God

Romans 8:8 So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.

He Cannot Enter into the Kingdom of God.

John 3:3-5 Jesus answered and said unto him, *Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.* Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born? Jesus answered, *Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.*

That Which Is Born of the Flesh Is Flesh

John 3:6-7 *That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.*

The Curse of The Law

Galatians 3:10 For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed *is* every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.

The Mt. Sinai Law Given Demands Perfect Obedience

Romans 10:5 For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, That the man which doeth those things shall live by them.

Galatians 3:12 And the law is not of faith: but, The man that doeth them shall live in them.

In My Flesh, Dwelleth No Good Thing

Romans 7:18-21 For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but *how* to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me.

The Law of Sin in My Members

Romans 7:22-23 For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.

There Is None That Doeth Good, No, Not One

Romans 3:12 They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; **there is none that doeth good, no, not one.**

Psalms 53:1 ¶ To the chief Musician upon Mahalath, Maschil, *A Psalm* of David. The fool hath said in his heart, *There is no God*. Corrupt are they, and have done abominable iniquity: **there is none that doeth good.**

Ecclesiastes 7:20 For **there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not.**

Isaiah 64:6 ¶ But we are all as an unclean *thing*, and all our righteousnesses *are* as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.

Summary Of Romans 1:18-3:20

Galatians 3:22 But **the scripture hath concluded all under sin**, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.

All Have Sinned

Romans 3:23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;

Romans 3:20-3:28

Romans 3:28 Therefore we conclude that **a man is justified by faith** without the deeds of the law.

Romans 3:20-28 Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law *is* the knowledge of sin. But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; Even the righteousness of God *which is* by faith of

Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth *to be* a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; To declare, *I say*, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus. Where *is* boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay: but by the law of faith. Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.

Not By Works of Righteousness Which We Have Done

Romans 4:2 For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath *whereof* to glory; but not before God.

Romans 9:32 Wherefore? Because ***they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law.*** For they stumbled at that stumblingstone;

Galatians 2:16 Knowing that **a man is not justified by the works of the law**, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and **not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.**

Titus 3:5 **Not by works of righteousness which we have done**, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;

We Have Peace with God Through Our Lord Jesus Christ

Romans 5:1 ¶ Therefore being justified by faith, **we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:**

Christ Died for the Ungodly

Romans 5:6 ¶ For when we were yet without strength, in due time **Christ died for the ungodly.**

While We Were Yet Sinners, Christ Died for Us

Romans 5:8-10 But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, **while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.** Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, **when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son,** much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.

We Have Now Received the Atonement.

Romans 5:11 And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom **we have now received the atonement.**

The Gift by Grace, Is by One Man, Jesus Christ

Romans 5:15 But not as the offence, so also *is* the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and **the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ,** hath abounded unto many.

By The Righteousness Of One the Free Gift Came

Romans 5:18 Therefore as by the offence of one *judgment came* upon all men to condemnation; even so **by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men** unto justification of life.

By The Obedience Of One Shall Many Be Made Righteous

Romans 5:19 For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so **by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.**

God Justifies the Ungodly

Romans 4:5. But to him that worketh not, but **believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly**, his faith is counted for righteousness.

He Was Wounded for Our Transgressions.

Isaiah 53:5-6. But **he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities:** the chastisement of our peace *was* upon him; and **with his stripes we are healed.** **6** All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and **the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.**

Matthew 20:28. Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and **to give his life a ransom for many.**

A Propitiation Through Faith in His Blood.

Romans 3:25. Whom **God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood**, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;

Jesus Christ Was Delivered for Our Offenses.

Romans 4:24-25. But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; **Who was delivered for our offences**, and was raised again for our justification.

Christ Died for the Ungodly.

Romans 5:6-8. For when we were yet without strength, in due time **Christ died for the ungodly.** For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, **while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.**

Romans 8:3. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh:

It Is God That Justifieth.

Romans 8:33. Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? **It is God that justifieth.**

1 Corinthians 15:3-4. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; 4 and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:

God Justifies the Heathen Through Faith.

Galatians 3:8. and the scripture, foreseeing that **God would justify the heathen through faith**, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, *saying*, In thee shall all nations be blessed.

Such Were Some of You.

1 Corinthians 6:9-11. Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. and ***SUCH WERE SOME OF YOU***: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.

He Hath Made Him to be Sin for Us.

2 Corinthians 5:21. For **he hath made him to be sin for us**, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

Galatians 1:4. **Who gave himself for our sins**, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father:

Christ Hath Redeemed Us from the Curse of the Law.

Galatians 3:13. **Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law**, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed *is* every one that hangeth on a tree:

Christ Also Hath Loved Us.

Ephesians 5:2. and walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour.

Christ Jesus Came into the World to Save Sinners.

1 Timothy 1:13-15. **Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious**: but I obtained mercy, because I did *it* ignorantly in unbelief. and the grace of our Lord was exceeding

abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. This *is* a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that **Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.**

That He Might Redeem Us from All Iniquity.

Titus 2:14. Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

According To His Mercy, He Saved Us.

Titus 3:3-7. For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, *and* hating one another. But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

Christ Was Once Offered to bear The Sins of Many.

Hebrews 9:28. So **Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many;** and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.

We Were Redeemed with the Precious Blood of Christ.

1 Peter 1:18-19. Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation *received* by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:

Jesus Christ Bare Our Sins in His Own Body on the Tree.

1 Peter 2:24. Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.

Christ Suffered for Sins, That He Might Bring us to God.

1 Peter 3:18. For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit:

He is the Propitiation for Our Sins.

1 John 2:2. and he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for *the sins* of the whole world.

God Loved Us and Sent His Son to Save Us from Our Sins.

1 John 4:9-10. In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son *to be* the propitiation for our sins.

Jesus Loved Us and Washed us in His Own Blood.

Revelation 1:5. and from Jesus Christ, *who is* the faithful witness, *and* the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. **Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood,**

Jesus Redeemed us to God by His Blood.

Revelation 5:9. and they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for **thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood** out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation;

Revelation 7:14. and I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. and he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, **and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.**

The Atonement: Jesus Christ's Death on the Cross

*Jesus Christ learned **obedience** from the things he suffered.*

Hebrews 5:8 Though he were a Son, yet **learned he obedience by the things which he suffered;**

By the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.

Romans 5:17-19 For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life **by one, Jesus Christ.**) Therefore as by the offence of one *judgment came* upon all men to condemnation; even so **by the righteousness of one** *the free gift came* upon all men unto justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so **by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.**

The Word of Faith.

Romans 10:8-13 But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, *even* in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, **the word of faith, which we preach;** That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed. For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. **For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.**

Received ye the Spirit By Faith, or by the Law?

Galatians 3:2 This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by **the hearing of faith?**

Galatians 3:5 He therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, *doeth he it* by the works of the law, or **by the hearing of faith?**

Christ Suffered "Once," Not Daily.

Hebrews 7:27. Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for **this he did once**, when he offered up himself.

Hebrews 9:7. But **into the second** *went* the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and *for* the errors of the people:

Hebrews 9:12. Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but **by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place**, having obtained eternal redemption *for us*.

Hebrews 9:25-26. Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others; For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.

Hebrews 9:28. So **Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many**; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.

Hebrews 10:10. By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once *for all*.

1 Peter 3:18. For **Christ also hath once suffered for sins**, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit:

This Do in Remembrance of Me.

Take Up His Cross Daily (In Memory), and Follow Me.

Luke 9:23. **and** he said to *them* all, If any *man* will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.

Luke 22:14-20. **and** when the hour was come, he sat down, and the twelve apostles with him. and he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer: For I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God. and he took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide *it* among yourselves: For I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come. and he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake *it*, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: **this do in remembrance of me**. Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup *is* the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you.

1 Corinthians 15:1-4. Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved, **if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you**, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:

1 Corinthians 11:23-26. For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the *same* night in which he was betrayed took bread: and when he had given thanks, he brake *it*, and said, *Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me.* After the same manner also *he took* the cup, when he had supped, saying, *This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.* For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come.

Christ's One-Time Death on the Cross Obtained Eternal Redemption For Us

Hebrews 9:12 Neither by the blood of goats and calves, **but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.**

Believers are SANCTIFIED by the Cross ONCE—Forever.

Hebrews 10:10. By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

Believers Are PERFECTED by the Cross ONCE—Forever.

Hebrews 10:14. For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.

Believers Are WASHED by the Cross.

Revelation 1:5. and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. **Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood,**

Believers Are JUSTIFIED by the Cross.

1 Corinthians 6:11. and such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.

Romans 5:9. Much more then, **being now justified by his blood,** we shall be saved from wrath through him.

Believers Are FORGIVEN of ALL Sin by the Cross.

Ephesians 1:7. In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;

1 John 1:7. But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and **the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.**

Believers Have the ATONEMENT Right Now.

Romans 5:11. and not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement.

Believers Have PEACE With God.

Romans 5:1. Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:

Believers Have Been RECONCILED With God by the Cross.

2 Corinthians 5:17-21. Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. and all things are of **God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ**, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; To wit, that **God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them;** and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

Let's Recap:

- Jesus ONE Offering Upon the Cross in AD 33, was for the Sins of the WHOLE World.
- God's Wrath Has Been Eternally Satisfied by the Cross.
- Believers are SANCTIFIED.
- Believers are PERFECTED.
- Believers are WASHED.
- Believers are JUSTIFIED.
- Believers have the ATONEMENT right now.
- Believers have PEACE with God.
- Believers have Been RECONCILED with God by Jesus death on the Cross.

Jesus PURGED Our Sins, by Himself, & then He Sat Down. Hebrews 1:3.

The Cross, a Finished Work

Jesus Offering Upon the Cross was for the Sins of the WHOLE World.

God's Wrath Has Been ETERNALLY Satisfied by the Cross.

Believers are PERFECTED Forever.

Believers are WASHED.

Believers are SANCTIFIED Forever by the Cross.



Believers have Been RECONCILED with God by the Cross.

Believers are JUSTIFIED.

Believers have the ATONEMENT Now.

Believers have PEACE with God.

Jesus PURGED Our Sins by Himself, & then He Sat Down.

The blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleansed us from all sin.

Ephesians 1:7 In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;

1 John 1:7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.

Revelation 1:5. and from Jesus Christ, *who is* the faithful witness, *and* the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. **Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood,**

Jesus Redeemed us to God by His Blood.

Revelation 5:9. and they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for **thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood** out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation;

Revelation 7:14. and I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. and he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, **and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.**

Jesus Christ is the Only ‘Entirely Sanctified’ Good Person.

The Lamb of God, Without Blemish, and Without Spot.

We are Made Righteous by Faith in Jesus Christ’s Innocent Life—Alone.

Romans 4:6. Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, *UNTO WHOM GOD IMPUTETH RIGHTEOUSNESS WITHOUT WORKS*,

Impute: is to account or record on behalf

THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.

Jeremiah 23:6. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this *is* his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.

Which Of You Convinceth Me of Sin?

John 8:46. Which of you convinceth me of sin? and if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me?

That Just Man.

Matthew 27:19. When he was set down on the judgment seat, his wife sent unto him, saying, **Have thou nothing to do with that just man:** for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of him.

What Evil Hath He Done.

Mark 15:14. Then Pilate said unto them, Why, **what evil hath he done?** and they cried out the more exceedingly, Crucify him.

I Find No Fault in This Man

Luke 23:4. Then said Pilate to the chief priests and to the people, **I find no fault in this man.**

Luke 23:14-15. Said unto them, Ye have brought this man unto me, as one that perverteth the people: and, **behold, I, having examined *him* before you, have found no fault in this man** touching those things whereof ye accuse him: No, nor yet Herod: for I sent you to him; and, lo, **nothing worthy of death is done unto him.**

John 18:38. Pilate saith unto him, What is truth? and when he had said this, he went out again unto the Jews, and saith unto them, **I find in him no fault at all.**

John 19:4. Pilate therefore went forth again, and saith unto them, Behold, I bring him forth to you, that ye may know that **I find no fault in him.**

John 19:6. When the chief priests therefore and officers saw him, they cried out, saying, Crucify *him*, crucify *him*. Pilate saith unto them, Take ye him, and crucify *him*: for **I find no fault in him.**

This Just Person.

Matthew 27:24. When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but *that* rather a tumult was made, he took water, and washed *his* hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of **this just person**: see ye *to it*.

1 Peter 3:18. For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, **the just** for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit:

Holy, Harmless, Undefined, Separate from Sinners

Hebrews 7:26. For such an high priest became us, **who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners**, and made higher than the heavens;

A Lamb Without Blemish and Without Spot

1 Peter 1:19. But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:

He Did not Sin.

1 Peter 2:22. **Who did no sin**, neither was guile found in his mouth:

Isaiah 53:9. **and** he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because **he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth.**

2 Corinthians 5:21. For he hath made him *to be* sin for us, **who knew no sin**; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

Hebrews 4:15. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as *we are*, **yet without sin.**

Hebrews 7:27. Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once, when he offered up himself.

1 John 3:5. **and** ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and **in him is no sin.**

Jesus Christ The Righteous.

1 John 2:1. My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. and if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous:

Seek the Righteousness of God in Christ Jesus, Not Your Own

Predicted.

Isaiah 56:1. Thus saith the LORD, Keep ye judgment, and do justice: for my salvation *is* near to come, and **my righteousness to be revealed**.

Ezekiel 16:14. and thy renown went forth among the heathen for **thy beauty**: for **it was perfect** through my comeliness, **which I had put upon thee, saith the Lord GOD**.

Revealed in the gospel.

Romans 1:17. For therein is **the righteousness of God revealed** from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.

Is of the Lord.

Isaiah 54:17. No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue *that* shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This *is* the heritage of the servants of the LORD, and **their righteousness is of me**, saith the LORD.

Described As.

The righteousness of faith.

Romans 4:13. For **the promise**, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but **through the righteousness of faith**.

Romans 9:30. What shall we say then? That **the Gentiles**, which followed not after righteousness, **have attained** to righteousness, even **the righteousness which is of faith**.

Romans 10:6. But **the righteousness which is of faith** speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down *from above*.)

The righteousness of God, without the law.

Romans 3:21. But now **the righteousness of God without the law** is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets;

The righteousness of God by faith in Christ.

Romans 3:22. Even the righteousness of God *which is* by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference:

Christ being made righteousness unto us.

1 Corinthians 1:30. But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption:

Our being made the righteousness of God, in Christ.

2 Corinthians 5:21. For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

Christ is the end of the law for.

Romans 10:4. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.

Christ called THE LORD OF OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.

Jeremiah 23:6. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this *is* his name whereby he shall be called, **THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.**

Christ brings in an everlasting righteousness.

Daniel 9:24. Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and **to bring in everlasting righteousness**, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy.

Is a free gift.

Romans 5:17. For if by one man's offence **death reigned by one**; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of **the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one**, Jesus Christ.)

God's righteousness never to be abolished.

Isaiah 5:16. But the LORD of hosts shall be exalted in judgment, and **God** that is holy **shall be sanctified in righteousness.**

The promises made through.

Romans 4:13. For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but **through the righteousness of faith.**

Saints.

Have, on believing.

Romans 4:5. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.

Romans 4:11. and he received **the sign** of circumcision, **a seal** of the righteousness of the faith which *he had yet* being uncircumcised: that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; **that righteousness might be imputed** unto them also:

Romans 4:24. But for us also, to whom **it shall be imputed**, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead;

Clothed with the robe of righteousness.

Isaiah 61:10. I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for **he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation**, he hath covered me with **the robe of righteousness**, as a bridegroom decketh *himself* with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth *herself* with her jewels.

Exalted in righteousness.

Psalms 89:16. In thy name shall they rejoice all the day: and in thy righteousness shall they be exalted.

Desire to be found in.

Philippians 3:9. and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:

Glory in having.

Isaiah 45:24-25. Surely, shall *one* say, **in the LORD have I righteousness** and strength: *even* to him shall *men* come; and all that are incensed against him shall be ashamed. **In the LORD shall all the seed of Israel be justified**, and shall glory.

Exhortation to seek righteousness.

Matthew 6:33. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

The Gentiles attained to.

Romans 9:30. What shall we say then? That **the Gentiles**, which followed not after righteousness, **have attained to righteousness**, even the righteousness **which is of faith**.

Blessedness of those who have.

Romans 4:6. Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works,

The Jews.

Ignorant of.

Romans 10:3. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves **unto the righteousness of God.**

Stumble at righteousness by faith.

Romans 9:32. Wherefore? Because **they sought it not by faith,** but as it were by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumblingstone;

Submit not to.

Romans 10:3. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, **have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.**

Exemplified.

Abraham,

Romans 4:9. Cometh this blessedness then upon the circumcision *only*, or upon the uncircumcision also? for we say that **faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness.**

Romans 4:22. and therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness.

Paul,

Philippians 3:7-9. But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things *but* loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them *but* dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in him, **not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:**

Sins are Forgiven. They are not “Imputed” (Not Recorded)

Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.

Romans 4:4-8. Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom **God imputeth righteousness without works**, *Saying*, Blessed *are* they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. **Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.**

Not imputing their trespasses unto them.

2 Corinthians 5:17-21. Therefore if any man *be* in Christ, *he is* a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. and all things *are* of **God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation**; To wit, that **God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.** Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech *you* by us: **we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.** For he hath made him *to be* sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

This is as the waters of Noah unto me:

Isaiah 54:9-10. For this *is* as the waters of Noah unto me: for as I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth; so have I sworn that I would not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee. For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the LORD that hath mercy on thee.

Love keeps no record of being wronged.

1 Corinthians 13:4-5. (NLT) **Love** is patient and kind. **Love** is not jealous or boastful or proud or rude. It does not demand its own way. It is not irritable, and it **keeps no record of being wronged.**

1 John 4:7-8. Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for **GOD IS LOVE.**

I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David.

Isaiah 55:1-3 Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Wherefore do ye spend money for *that which* is not bread? and your labour for *that which* satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye *that which* is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness. Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live; and **I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David.**

He shall bear their iniquities.

Isaiah 53:10-12. Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put *him* to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see *his* seed, he shall prolong *his* days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, *and* shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for **he shall bear their iniquities.** Therefore will I divide him *a portion* with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and **he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.**

If he hath wronged thee, or oweth thee ought, put that on mine account.

Philemon 18-19. If he hath wronged thee, or oweth thee ought, put that on mine account; I Paul have written *it* with mine own hand, I will repay *it*: albeit I do not say to thee how thou owest unto me even thine own self besides.

Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree.

1 Peter 2:24. Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: **by whose stripes ye were healed.**

Christ also hath once suffered for sins.

1 Peter 3:18. For **Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God**, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit:

The Blood of Jesus Christ His Son Cleanseth Us from All Sin.

1 John 1:7-9. But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and **the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.** If we say that we have no sin, we

deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. **If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.**

Your Sins Are Forgiven.

1 John 2:12. I write unto you, little children, because **your sins are forgiven** you for his name's sake.

Whosoever Believeth In Him Shall Receive Remission Of Sins.

Acts 10:43. To him give all the prophets witness, that **through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.**

Through Jesus Is Preached Unto You The Forgiveness Of Sins.

Acts 13:38. Be it known unto you therefore, men *and* brethren, that **through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins:**

All That Believe Are Justified from All Things.

Acts 13:39. And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.

That Your Sins May Be Blotted Out.

Acts 3:19. Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord;

We Have The Forgiveness Of Sins.

Colossians 1:14. In whom we have redemption through his blood, *even* the forgiveness of sins:

Having Forgiven You All Trespasses.

Colossians 2:13-14. and you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross.

To The Lord Our God Belong Mercies and Forgivenesses.

Daniel 9:9. To the Lord our God *belong* mercies and forgivenesses, though we have rebelled against him.

We Have Redemption Through His Blood.

Ephesians 1:6-8. To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace; Wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence.

By Grace are ye Saved Through Faith.

Ephesians 2:4-9. But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) and hath raised *us* up together, and made *us* sit together in heavenly *places* in Christ Jesus: That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in *his* kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. **For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.**

Forgiving Iniquity and Transgression and Sin.

Exodus 34:6-7. and the LORD passed by before him, and proclaimed, The LORD, The LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, Keeping mercy for thousands, **forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin**, and that will by no means clear *the guilty*; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth *generation*.

He Had By Himself Purged Our Sins.

Hebrews 1:3. Who being the brightness of *his* glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, **when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down** on the right hand of the Majesty on high.

Their Sins and Iniquities Will I Remember No More.

Hebrews 10:17. And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more.

Hebrews 8:12. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and **their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.**

He Obtained Eternal Redemption For Us.

Hebrews 9:12. Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but **by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.**

The Blood Of Christ, Purges The Conscience.

Hebrews 9:14. How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, **purge your conscience from dead works** to serve the living God?

Though Your Sins Be As Scarlet.

Isaiah 1:18. Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: **though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.**

The People Shall Be Forgiven Their Iniquity.

Isaiah 33:24. and the inhabitant shall not say, I am sick: the people that dwell therein *shall be* forgiven *their* iniquity.

The Lord Will Not Remember Thy Sins.

Isaiah 43:25. I, even I, *am* he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins.

I Have Blotted Out, As A Thick Cloud, Thy Transgressions.

Isaiah 44:22. I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins: return unto me; for I have redeemed thee.

Seek Ye The Lord While He May Be Found.

Isaiah 55:6-11. Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near: Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. For my thoughts *are* not your thoughts, neither *are* your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For *as* the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts. For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper *in the thing* whereto I sent it.

I Will Remember Their Sin No More.

Jeremiah 31:34. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for **I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.**

I Will Cleanse Them From All Their Iniquity.

Jeremiah 33:8. And **I will cleanse them from all their iniquity**, whereby they have sinned against me; and **I will pardon all their iniquities**, whereby they have sinned, and whereby they have transgressed against me.

I Will Pardon Them.

Jeremiah 50:20. In those days, and in that time, saith the LORD, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and *there shall be* none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found: for **I will pardon them** whom I reserve.

Thou Art A Gracious God, and Merciful.

Jonah 4:2. And he prayed unto the LORD, and said, I pray thee, O LORD, *was* not this my saying, when I was yet in my country? Therefore I fled before unto Tarshish: for I knew that thou *art* a gracious God, and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repentest thee of the evil.

Ye May Be Clean From All Your Sins.

Leviticus 16:30. For on that day shall **the priest make an atonement for you, to cleanse you, that ye may be clean from all your sins before the LORD.**

Romans 5:11. And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom **we have now received the atonement.**

The Remission Of Their Sins.

Luke 1:77. To give knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of their sins,

Remission Of Sins Should Be Preached In His Name.

Luke 24:47. **And** that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

He Shall Save His People From Their Sins.

Matthew 1:21. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.

God Delighteth In Mercy.

Micah 7:18-19. Who *is* a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth *in* mercy. He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea.

Thou Art A God Ready To Pardon.

Nehemiah 9:17. And refused to obey, neither were mindful of thy wonders that thou didst among them; but hardened their necks, and in their rebellion appointed a captain to return to their bondage: but **thou art a God ready to pardon, gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and forsookest them not.**

Who Forgiveth All Thine Iniquities.

Psalms 103:2-4. Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits: Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases; Who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies;

As The East Is from The West.

Psalms 103:12. As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us.

The Lord Is Merciful and Gracious.

Psalms 103:7-8. He made known his ways unto Moses, his acts unto the children of Israel. The LORD *is* merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy.

Blessed Is He Whose Transgression Is Forgiven.

Psalms 32:1. *A Psalm of David, Maschil.* Blessed *is he* whose transgression *is* forgiven, whose sin *is* covered.

Blot Out My Transgressions.

Psalm 51:1. Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions.

Create In Me A Clean Heart.

Psalm 51:9-13. Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me *with thy* free spirit. *Then* will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee.

As For Our Transgressions, Thou Shalt Purge Them Away.

Psalm 65:3. Iniquities prevail against me: *as for* our transgressions, thou shalt purge them away.

O Lord, Art A God Full Of Compassion.

Psalm 86:15-16. But thou, O Lord, *art* a God full of compassion, and gracious, longsuffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth. O turn unto me, and have mercy upon me; give thy strength unto thy servant, and save the son of thine handmaid.

Thou, Lord, Art Good, and Ready To Forgive

Psalm 86:5. For thou, Lord, *art* good, and ready to forgive; and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon thee.

Jesus Loved Us and Washed Us from Our Sins.

Revelation 1:5. **and** from Jesus Christ, *who is* the faithful witness, *and* the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood,

Revelation 7:14. and I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. and he said to me, **These are they which** came out of great tribulation, and **have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.**

There Shall Come Out of Sion the Deliverer.

Romans 11:26. And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob:

I Shall Take Away Their Sins.

Romans 11:27. For this *is* my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins.

Where Sin Abounded, Grace Did Much More Abound.

Romans 5:20. Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound:

There Shall Be a Fountain Opened to the House of David.

Zechariah 13:1. In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness.

Unrepentant Sins that Result in Being Outside the City of God.

There are Different Degrees of Punishment.

Luke 12:47-48. And that servant, which knew his lord's will, and prepared not *himself*, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many *stripes*. But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few *stripes*. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more.

There are Sins not Unto Death (Repented Sins)

1 John 5:16-17. If any man see his brother sin **a sin which is not unto death**, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for **them that sin not unto death**. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it. All unrighteousness is sin: and **there is a sin not unto death**.

God Forgives All Who Repent, and Believe the Gospel

Mark 1:15. And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: **repent ye, and believe the gospel**.

Luke 24:47. And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

God Forgives All Who Humble Themselves and Confess Their Sins.

1 John 1:9. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Luke 18:13-14. And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as *his* eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, **God be merciful to me a sinner. I tell you, this man went down to his house justified** *rather* than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and **he that humbleth himself shall be exalted**.

There Are Sins Unto Death (Grievous Sins that are Never Repented of).

1 John 5:16-17. If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. **There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it**. All unrighteousness is sin: and there is a sin not unto death.

The Wrath of God Upon the Children of Disobedience.

Ephesians 5:3-6. But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints; neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks. For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, **hath any inheritance in the kingdom of christ and of God.** Let no man deceive you with vain words: for **because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience.**

The Unrighteous Shall Not Inherit the Kingdom of God.

1 Corinthians 6:9-10. Know ye not that **the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God?** **Be not deceived:** neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, **shall inherit the kingdom of God.**

Such Shall Not Inherit the Kingdom of God.

Galatians 5:19-21. Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that **they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.**

By Nature The Children of Wrath.

Ephesians 2:2-3. Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in **the children of disobedience:** Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature **the children of wrath**, even as others.

Shall Have Their Part In The Lake of Fire.

Revelation 21:8. But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, **shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone:** which is the second death.

For Without Are.

Revelation 22:15. **For without are** dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.

The Wrath of God on the Children of Disobedience.

Colossians 3:5-6. Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry: **For which things' sake the wrath of god cometh on the children of disobedience:**

They Which Commit Such Things Are Worthy of Death.

Romans 1:28-32. and even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient; Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, Without understanding, covenantbreakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful: Who **knowing the judgment of god, that they which commit such things are worthy of death**, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.

The Law is not Made for a Righteous Man, but for the Lawless.

1 Timothy 1:9-10. Knowing this, that **the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient**, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers, For whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind, for menstealers, for liars, for perjured persons, and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine;

Such Were Some of You

1 Corinthians 6:11. and **SUCH WERE SOME OF YOU:** but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.

1 Corinthians 12:2. Ye know that ye were Gentiles, carried away unto these dumb idols, even as ye were led.

Titus 3:3-6. For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another. But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour;

1 Peter 4:2-3. That he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God. For the time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles,

when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries:

Romans 6:17-19. But God be thanked, that ye *were the servants of sin*, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness. I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh: for *as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity*; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness.

Ephesians 2:1-3. and you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.

If Any Man Sin, We Have An Advocate With The Father

1 John 2:1-2. My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. and **IF ANY MAN SIN, WE HAVE AN ADVOCATE WITH THE FATHER, JESUS CHRIST** the righteous: and He is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.

The Blood of Jesus Christ His Son Cleanseth Us From All Sin

1 John 1:7. But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and **THE BLOOD OF JESUS CHRIST HIS SON CLEANSETH US FROM ALL SIN.**

Institutional Church Denominations.

The Apostles in the First Century Started House Churches

House Churches are the only churches in the New Testament. Starting in the second century, cathedrals were built on top of the first house churches long after the first generation of the Church and the apostles had died.

Christians around the world believe in Jesus Christ's divinity, the Trinity of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and the authority of the scriptures as the Word of God. However, despite these shared beliefs, an immense number of Christians have separated into various denominations. The differences between these denominations can range from their worship styles to their interpretations of theological teachings.

Roman Catholic Church

In 607 AD, Pope Boniface III received a decree from the Byzantine Emperor Phocas declaring the Roman See (the Diocese of Rome) as the "head of all the Churches" and the Pope as the "Universal Bishop." This decree solidified the Pope's primacy over other bishops and marked a crucial step in the establishment of papal supremacy. Its headquarters are located in Vatican City. Today, around 18.7% of the U.S. population, totaling around 62 million people, identifies as Roman Catholics, illustrating the enduring influence of this denomination.

1260 years later, in 1867, the Papal States, which were territories in central Italy governed by the Pope, faced significant challenges due to the ongoing process of Italian unification. Forces aligned with the Italian nationalist movement sought to unify the various Italian states, including the Papal States, into a single nation-state.

During this time, conflicts and military actions involving the Papal States occurred. In 1860, some territories were annexed by the Kingdom of Sardinia. By 1870, with the capture of Rome, the process of Italian unification was completed. **As a result, the Papal States ceased to exist, and Rome became the capital of the newly unified Kingdom of Italy.**

During the Dark Ages, the Papacy conducted an Inquisition, which gave the state authority to kill the saints. During this time, no one in Europe could buy, sell, or conduct business without approval and license from the Roman Catholic Church.

Eastern Orthodox Church

The first division in Christianity occurred in the Great Schism of 1054 when the Eastern Orthodox Church separated from the Roman Catholic Church. **The Eastern Orthodox Church contested the authority of the Pope** and emphasized a collective consensus of Bishops. Other differences included the use of leavened bread and Greek text in the Eastern Orthodox Church. There are between 1 and 6 million members of the Eastern Orthodox Church in America.

Church of England

Formed in 16th-century England, the Church of England was the first major Protestant denomination of Christianity. It was associated with the reign of King Henry VIII, which prompted many individuals across Europe to break away from the Roman Catholic Church.

Puritanism

Upon the formation of the Church of England, the Puritanism movement emerged in the late 16th century. The Puritans sought a simpler form of worship, emphasized personal holiness, and stressed the need to lead a devout life through simple living, frugality, and hard work. Their influence on the American colonies through immigration was significant, and their impact can still be observed in the cultural and social landscape of America today.

Lutheranism

The first Protestant denomination to break away from Catholicism was Lutheranism, which was a Reformation movement in Germany in the 16th century. This division was caused by the excessive practices of the Roman Catholic Church at that time. The German monk Martin Luther believed that these practices contradicted true Christianity. Today, there are 3.3 million members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Presbyterianism

Drawing inspiration from the 16th-century Protestant Reformation, Presbyterianism was established based on the doctrines of John Knox and John Calvin. It entails a system of elected elders in the Church. It emphasizes simple worship, with followers concentrating on missionary work and addressing social injustice. Today, there are over 1 million Presbyterians in America.

Baptist

Baptists originated in England during the 17th century and were influenced by the Puritanism movement. The Southern Baptist Convention is a significant denomination in the United States. This denomination advocates for the complete immersion of an individual during baptism as a way to cleanse all sin. There are 50 million Baptists in America, constituting 15.3% of the country's population and a third of all American Protestants.

Methodism

Founded in 18th-century England by John Wesley, Methodism positioned itself as a "renewal movement" aligned with Anglicanism. The United Methodist Church is a significant denomination in America. Wesley inspired working-class individuals who were often overlooked by other churches and emphasized salvation through faith in Jesus Christ. Presently, there are 6.5 million Methodists in America.

Mormonism

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, also known as Mormonism, is a 19th-century Christian denomination founded by Joseph Smith. This group views the Book of Mormon as having equal importance to the Bible. Currently, there are approximately 6.5 million Mormons in America.

Episcopal Church

The Episcopal Church in America, considered an American branch of the Church of England, has a current membership of around 1.5 million. This denomination has some practices in common with the Anglican Church. It maintains the Nicene Creed as a statement of faith, as also used in the Church of England and the Roman Catholic Church.

Seventh-Day Adventist

The Seventh-day Adventist denomination, founded in the 19th century, observes the Sabbath on Saturdays in accordance with the Fourth Commandment, which is a significant departure from the Sunday observance of other Christian denominations. This denomination also promotes vegetarianism and abstains from alcohol and tobacco, reflecting a unique set of beliefs and practices that may pique the interest of the audience. Today, over 1 million Seventh-day Adventists in America adhere to these distinctive principles.

Jehovah's Witness

The Jehovah's Witness denomination in America has about 2.5 million members and is growing every day. Founded in the late 19th century, followers of Jehovah's Witness believe that Jesus Christ is the highest creation of God and that we are currently living in the final days.

Church of the Nazarene

The Church of the Nazarene is a relatively small Christian denomination in America, with around 650,000 members. Established in the late 19th century, it is dedicated to propagating the Gospel and striving for holiness.

Pentecostalism

Christianity's Pentecostal denomination was created in the early 20th century and has amassed a staggering 65 million followers across America. This denomination focuses on experiencing the Holy Spirit with many followers "speaking in tongues" and witnessing practices of divine healing.

Assemblies of God

The Assemblies of God denomination has more than 13,000 churches and 3 million members in America. It was founded in 1914 and is influenced by Pentecostal Christianity, making it a relatively new denomination.

Quakers

The Religious Society of Friends, also known as Quakers, is a Christian denomination that advocates simplicity, pacifism, and silent worship. Quakers uphold strong moral values, reject materialism, and promote equality for all individuals. Quaker women have played a significant role in the movement since its inception, and all Quakers have been outspoken opponents of slavery and the mistreatment of Native Americans. Presently, there are approximately 75,000 Quakers in America.

Christian Science Church

The Christian Science Church was established in the late 19th century. It promotes the belief that sickness, death, and sin are illusions that can be overcome through spiritual empowerment. The Church offers spiritual treatments for those seeking healing. Currently, there are approximately 300,000 members of the Christian Science Church in America.

First Century House Churches

The First-Century House Church was Patterned After Synagogues

Ancient Synagogues

Ancient synagogues were small compared with modern cathedrals and churches. Only those living within a “Sabbath day’s journey” (2000 feet) attended. Everyone sat in a square. *Everyone who attended the synagogue was expected to be involved.*

Every male 12 & older was expected to read the scriptures. It was part of his religious training. He was given this opportunity to read a scripture he didn’t understand and get the help of the elderly men in the synagogue. As the next person in line, the young man would stand in the center of the synagogue and read so that everyone could see and hear him. It was the scriptures, not the one reading them, that was exalted. In this way, each male over the age of 12 equally took turns reading a short portion from the holy scriptures and then sat down. After the scriptures were read, every man who desired to do so took turns responding to what was read. After everyone was finished speaking and responding in an orderly fashion, the next person in line to read would stand in the middle, read a short portion of scripture, sit down, and so forth.



The First Century House Church

While the apostles were still alive, **the church was the people who believed in Jesus Christ and** met for worship *in the home* of one of the believers.

Everyone sat in a square or circle. The one next to read stood in the center so everyone in the house could see and hear what was being read. The most prized writings were the four gospels, the letters of Paul or one of the other eyewitnesses of Jesus Christ after the resurrection—the Apostles.

Do you want to understand the Scriptures?

Each male over the age of 12 took turns reading a short portion of the scriptures. He read something that he wanted help to understand and then sat down. Then, all the older Christians took turns in an orderly fashion, from youngest to oldest, responding to what was read. After everyone had finished speaking and edifying one another, the next person read from the scriptures something that he wanted help to understand and then sat down, and so forth.

The Early Christian Church

A young man has just finished reading a few verses from the scriptures (usually less than 2 minutes' worth of reading), and sits down. Everyone is sitting in a circle or a square; There are only a couple dozen people in the home. Everyone, in an orderly fashion, from youngest to oldest, took turns sharing what the Holy Ghost had put in their hearts concerning what they heard while the scriptures were being read. There was an elder present who would speak up if an error was made. These first-century house meetings were intensely interesting. No one knew what topics or what scriptures would be discussed in advance. Everyone was given a chance to read the scriptures, and they needed help understanding and had an opportunity to practice answering to defend their faith—every week. The house church trained everyone on how to be Christians and defend the faith.

After Reading the Scriptures, There Is A “Love Feast”

After everyone had their fill of scriptures and edified each other, the women presented to the whole church a love feast filled with all manner of delicious food. While the bread is being passed around and eaten, everyone remembers the broken body of Jesus Christ on the Cross. While the fruit of the vine is being passed around the room for everyone to drink from, the church remembers the blood of Jesus that was sprinkled around the Cross for 6 hours for their sins.

How the Early Church Used the Money That Was Collected

By the time church ends everyone has had a chance to talk to one another and is intimately acquainted with each other's lives. Is all caught up on what happened during the week. Help is offered to any of the poor who need it, and no one goes away wanting anything.

The collections were made for the poor, the widows and the fatherless, and anyone else that had a desperate need. No one had to worry about their daily needs.

Love Your Neighbor

Go two thousand feet in every direction from your home, which is about 4 city blocks. Knock on every neighbor's door, and find as many Christians as you can. Then invite them to your home! Ask each family to bring their bibles and a dish of food to share with everyone after the Bible reading & open discussion. Go from house to house giving each family an opportunity to host the home church in their own homes each week, and take up collections to help the poor and needy in your community.

Ye Are Taught of God to Love One Another.

Next, imagine the unbelievers in town and how they would sit up and take notice. The Christians in town help each other, meet in each other's homes, and love each other. The Christians help the poor, no one that has any need among them is neglected. Christians eat together and are more like a family, than in modern churches.

Invite Your Neighbors to Your Home

Finally imagine how easy it is, to invite unbelievers to visit your home for a meal. Invite them to observe a Bible reading, and enjoy a feast afterward. Who among the thousands of lonely people in your town could turn an offer like that down?

Are there too many for one house church? That is okay! It's time to grow into a community of house churches! Trust each house church to God, that the Holy Spirit will lead each one of them. Where two or three are gathered in Jesus's name, Jesus is there!

What Do You Need to Get Started?

All you need to start a home church is the Holy Bible. If you have a Bible you have everything you need. Invite other Christians and take turns going from house to house. Each able family should bring delicious food to share with everyone afterward. Make sure there is bread and grape juice! Make the time to share the bread and grape juice special. Take up a collection to be used for the poor in your community and also for missionary outreach in your area.

How To Discover Truth?

1. Set aside all preconceived ideas. Opinions don't matter! The Holy Bible is the only source of truth!
2. **Find 100% of the verses in the Holy Bible on each topic discussed. Don't leave a single verse out!**
3. Believe whatever the Bible says. Conclusions must always line up with 100% of the Bible's verses discovered during Step #2

A Helpful Example: There are approximately 60 verses that discuss what happens at death in the Bible. 95% of these verses teach the exact same thing, so clearly that a child can see it and understand them. Then on the opposite side, there are 1-2 verses that appear to teach something different. So what is the truth? Obviously, we ought to take our stand with the weightier 95% of these verses and what they teach us. The 5% or 1-2 verses that appear to teach something different need to be studied more carefully. In the end, it is always demonstrated that there is 100% unity in the scriptures. Preconceived ideas from what we have been taught over a lifetime might have been preventing us from seeing it.

Most of the major topics in the Bible have 30-40 verses that mention them.

1. **Step 1.** Set aside all preconceived ideas. Opinions don't matter! The Holy Bible is the only source of truth!
2. **Step 2.** Find 100% of the 30-40 verses that speak about the topic being discussed.
3. **Step 3.** Then, determine what 95% of these verses clearly teach and believe whatever those verses teach. After you study the other 5% of these verses more closely, you will always discover 100% unity in the scriptures on every topic.

How Heresy Occurs.

There will always be someone who stubbornly holds on to the "5% or 1-2 verses" and ignores the "95% or 35+ verses" and will not be convinced no matter how many bible texts you show them. That is one way that heresies come into the church.

Hero Worship

Another way heresies enter the church is through "hero worship." A famous church father or person from Church History writes or says something, and no matter how many verses you show them from the Holy Bible, they won't go against their favorite church hero. Do not be deceived by them. This type of person is NOT "a Bible-alone Christian."

Romans 16:17 ¶ Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them.

Do not argue or debate with a heretic; rather, reject them from your home!

Titus 3:10. A man that is an heretick after the first and second admonition reject;

House Churches the Only Churches in the Bible

The Apostles Started House Churches; they were not the Builders of Grand Cathedrals.

Acts 2:46-47 And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread **from house to house**, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And **the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.**

Acts 8:3 As for Saul, he made havock of **the church, entering into every house**, and haling men and women committed *them* to prison.

Romans 16:5 Likewise *greet* **the church that is in their house**. Salute my wellbeloved Epaphroditus, who is the firstfruits of Achaia unto Christ.

1 Corinthians 16:19 ¶ The churches of Asia salute you. Aquila and Priscilla salute you much in the Lord, with **the church that is in their house**.

Colossians 4:15 Salute the brethren which are in Laodicea, and Nymphas, and **the church which is in his house**.

1 Timothy 3:5 (For if a man know not how to rule **his own house**, how shall he take care of **the church of God**?)

1 Timothy 3:15 But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in **the house of God**, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.

Philemon 2 And to *our* beloved Apphia, and Archippus our fellowsoldier, and **to the church in thy house**:

Houses that Followed Peter Were Not Set Above Other Houses

1 Corinthians 1:11-13 For it hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them *which are of the house* of Chloe, that there are contentions among you. Now this I say, that **every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ. Is Christ divided?** was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?

1 Corinthians 2:2 For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.

1 Corinthians 3:3-6 For ye are yet carnal: for whereas *there is* among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men? **For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal?** ¶ Who then is Paul, and who *is* Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase.

1 Corinthians 3:9 For we are labourers together with God: **ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building.**

1 Corinthians 3:22 Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; **all are yours;**

1 Corinthians 4:6 And these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and to Apollos for your sakes; that ye might **learn in us not to think of men above that which is written, that no one of you be puffed up for one against another.**



START A HOUSE CHURCH IN YOUR HOME



PRAY TOGETHER. Update a Prayer List, With Answers to Prayer, & New Prayer Requests.



NO SERMONS! NO BIBLE TEACHERS TAKE TURNS READING THE BIBLE



SING HYMNS TOGETHER



LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR
INVITE FAMILY, FRIENDS, COWORKERS & NEIGHBORS



HOST A HOUSE CHURCH IN YOUR OWN HOME



Potluck Dinner
EAT BREAD AND DRINK WINE (GRAPE JUICE), TOGETHER



TAKE UP COLLECTIONS FOR THE POOR, DO GOOD WORKS!



Baptise All That Believe in Jesus Christ, and Repent of Their Sins



"I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator... with such an one no not to eat." 1 Corinthians 5:11

How to do a "House Church" or Home Bible Study Group

All that is needed is your Bibles. A pastor and a sermon is not necessary! You can study topically or work your way through a book of the Bible, one verse at a time.

1. Start by inviting people you see regularly to “join some friends and our families for a Bible study. There will be a meal afterward.”
2. Start with prayer requests, write them down, and update the list each week.
3. Read and study the Bible. Every male over the age of 12, take turns reading a verse or two. Allow the young men to choose something they want help understanding. In an orderly fashion, starting with the young men, working your way up to the elderly, find related verses that can help explain and discuss what was read.
4. Gather a collection / financial offerings to help anyone in need, especially those of your own house church.
5. Remember the body and blood of Christ, examine yourselves, wait for each other to be ready, then enjoy a meal together,

“Not for that we have dominion over your faith” 2 Corinthians 1:24

“For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.”
Matthew 18:20

Q. Which Church Do You Go To?

- “I go to the church at the house of My family and I are followers of Christ. We are called Christians.”

“All Ye Are Brethren”

But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, *even Christ*; and **all ye are brethren**. And call no *man* your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven. Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, *even Christ*. **Matthew 23:8-10**

Evangelists, Bishops, Elders & Deacons

Evangelists

Acts 6:1-7 ¶ And in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration. **Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables.** Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word. And the saying pleased the whole multitude: and **they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolas a proselyte of Antioch:** Whom they set before the apostles: and when they had prayed, they laid *their*

hands on them. And **the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith.**

Acts 21:8 ¶ And the next *day* we that were of Paul's company departed, and came unto Caesarea: and we entered into the house of **Philip the evangelist, which was one of the seven; and abode with him.**

Ephesians 4:11 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, **evangelists;** and some, pastors and teachers;

2 Timothy 4:5 But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, **do the work of an evangelist,** make full proof of thy ministry.

Bishops

Timothy 3:1-7 ¶ This *is* a true saying, If a man desire **the office of a bishop**, he desireth a good work. **A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach; Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity;** (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?) **Not a novice**, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.

Acts 20:28 Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which **the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.**

Philippians 1:1 ¶ Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, **with the bishops** and deacons:

1 Timothy 3:2 **A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach;**

2 Timothy 4:22 The Lord Jesus Christ *be* with thy spirit. Grace *be* with you. Amen. The second *epistle* unto **Timotheus, ordained the first bishop of the church of the Ephesians**, was written from Rome, when Paul was brought before Nero the second time.

Titus 1:7 For a **bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not selfwilled, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre;**

Titus 3:15 All that are with me salute thee. Greet them that love us in the faith. Grace *be* with you all. Amen. It was written to **Titus, ordained the first bishop of the church of the Cretians**, from Nicopolis of Macedonia.

1 Peter 2:25 For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto **the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls**.

Elders

1 Timothy 5:1 ¶ Rebuke not **an elder**, but intreat *him* as a father; *and* the younger men as brethren;

1 Timothy 5:17 Let **the elders that rule well** be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine.

1 Timothy 5:19 Against **an elder** receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses.

Titus 1:5 For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and **ordain elders in every city**, as I had appointed thee:

Hebrews 11:1-2 ¶ Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. For **by it the elders obtained a good report**.

James 5:14 Is any sick among you? let him **call for the elders of the church**; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord:

1 Peter 5:1 ¶ The elders which are among you **I exhort, who am also an elder**, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed:

1 Peter 5:5 ¶ Likewise, ye younger, **submit yourselves unto the elder**. Yea, all *of you* be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble.

2 John 1 ¶ **The elder** unto the elect lady and her children, whom I love in the truth; and not I only, but also all they that have known the truth;

3 John 1 ¶ **The elder** unto the wellbeloved Gaius, whom I love in the truth.

Deacons

Philippians 1:1 ¶ Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons:

1 Timothy 3:8-13 ¶ Likewise *must* the deacons *be* grave, not doubletongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre; Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience. And let these also first be proved; then let them use the office of a deacon, being *found* blameless. Even so *must their wives be* grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things. Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well. For they that have used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.

Ministers & Pastors

“All Ye Are Brethren”

But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, *even Christ*; and **all ye are brethren**. And call no *man* your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven. Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, *even Christ*. **Matthew 23:8-10**

2 Chronicles 15:3 Now for a long season Israel *hath been* without the true God, and without a teaching priest, and without law.

Jeremiah 3:15 And I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding.

Jeremiah 17:16 As for me, I have not hastened from *being* a pastor to follow thee: neither have I desired the woeful day; thou knowest: **that which came out of my lips was right before thee.**

Matthew 28:20 **Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you:** and, lo, I am with you *always, even unto the end of the world.* Amen.

Acts 13:1 ¶ Now there were **in the church that was at Antioch** certain prophets and teachers; as **Barnabas, and Simeon** that was called Niger, and **Lucius** of Cyrene, and **Manaen**, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and **Saul**.

Romans 12:7 Or ministry, **let us wait on our ministering: or he that teacheth, on teaching;**

1 Corinthians 12:29 Are all apostles? are all prophets? **are all teachers?** are all workers of miracles?

Hebrews 5:12 For when for the time **ye ought to be teachers**, ye have need that one teach you again which *be* the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat.

1 Peter 5:1-3 ¶ The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight *thereof*, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; Neither as being lords over *God's* heritage, but being ensamples to the flock.

Not Greedy of Filthy Lucre

Isaiah 56:11 Yea, *they are greedy dogs which can never have enough, and they are shepherds that cannot understand*: they all look to their own way, **every one for his gain**, from his quarter.

1 Timothy 3:3 Not given to wine, no striker, **not greedy of filthy lucre**; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous;

1 Timothy 3:8 ¶ Likewise *must* the deacons *be* grave, not doubletongued, not given to much wine, **not greedy of filthy lucre**;

Titus 1:7 For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not selfwilled, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, **not given to filthy lucre**;

Titus 1:11 Whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, **for filthy lucre's sake**.

1 Peter 5:2 Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight *thereof*, not by constraint, but willingly; **not for filthy lucre**, but of a ready mind;

Jude 11 Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and **ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward**, and perished in the gainsaying of Core.

Not Adorned with Costly Array & Jewelry

Matthew 11:7-8 ¶ And as they departed, Jesus began to say unto the multitudes concerning John, *What went ye out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken with the wind? But what went ye out for to see? A man clothed in soft raiment? behold, they that wear soft clothing are in kings' houses.*

1 Timothy 2:9-10 ¶ In like manner also, **that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array**; But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works.

1 Peter 3:1-6 ¶ Likewise, ye wives, *be* in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives; While they behold your chaste conversation *coupled* with fear. **Whose adorning let it not be that outward *adorning* of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel;** But *let it be* the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, *even the ornament* of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands: Even as Sara obeyed Abraham, calling him lord: whose daughters ye are, as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement.

Preach the Word—Not Philosophy & Fables

Colossians 2:8 Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.

Deuteronomy 6:12 *Then* beware lest thou forget the LORD, which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage.

Matthew 7:15 ¶ Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.

Matthew 10:17 But beware of men: for they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues;

Matthew 16:6 Then Jesus said unto them, Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees.

Philippians 3:2 Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the concision.

2 Peter 3:17 Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know *these things* before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness.

Colossians 2:18 Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind,

Song of Solomon 2:15 Take us the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vines: for our vines have tender grapes.

Jeremiah 29:8 ¶ For thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Let not your prophets and your diviners, that *be* in the midst of you, deceive you, neither hearken to your dreams which ye cause to be dreamed.

Romans 16:17 ¶ Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them.

Ephesians 5:6 Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience.

Hebrews 13:9 Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines. For *it is* a good thing that the heart be established with grace; not with meats, which have not profited them that have been occupied therein.

2 John 8 Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward.

Acts 17:18 Then certain philosophers of the Epicureans, and of the Stoicks, encountered him. And some said, What will this babbler say? other some, He seemeth to be a setter forth of strange gods: because he preached unto them Jesus, and the resurrection.

Acts 17:32 ¶ And when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked: and others said, We will hear thee again of this *matter*.

Romans 1:21-22 Because that, when they knew God, they glorified *him* not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools,

1 Corinthians 1:19-23 For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where *is* the wise? where *is* the scribe? where *is* the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness;

1 Corinthians 3:18-19 ¶ Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise. For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness.

1 Corinthians 15:35-36 ¶ But some *man* will say, How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come? *Thou* fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die:

2 Corinthians 10:5 Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;

1 Timothy 6:20 O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane *and* vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called:

2 Timothy 2:17 And their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus;

2 Timothy 2:18 Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some.

2 Timothy 3:13 But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived.

Not after the commandments and doctrines of men

Colossians 2:22 Which all are to perish with the using;) after the commandments and doctrines of men?

Matthew 15:2-9 Why do thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? for they wash not their hands when they eat bread. But he answered and said unto them, *Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition? For God commanded, saying, Honour thy father and mother: and, He that curseth father or mother, let him die the death. But ye say, Whosoever shall say to his father or his mother, It is a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; And honour not his father or his mother, he shall be free. Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition. Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying, This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.*

Mark 7:3-13 For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, except they wash *their* hands oft, eat not, holding the tradition of the elders. And *when they come* from the market, except they wash, they eat not. And many other things there be, which they have received to hold, *as* the washing of cups, and pots, brassen vessels, and of tables. Then the Pharisees and scribes asked him, Why walk not thy disciples according to the tradition of the elders, but eat bread with unwashen hands? He answered and said unto them, *Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do. And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition. For Moses said, Honour thy father and thy mother; and, Whoso curseth father or mother, let him die the death: But ye say, If a man shall say to his father or mother, It is Corban, that is to say, a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; he shall be free. And ye suffer him no more*

to do ought for his father or his mother; Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered: and many such like things do ye.

Galatians 1:14 And profited in the Jews' religion above many my equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers.

Your Adversary the Devil, as a Roaring Lion—Part 1.

By David Michael Curtis

David Michael Curtis wrote the document "Your Adversary the Devil, as a Roaring Lion, Walketh About, Seeking Whom He May Devour—Part 1." It discusses various topics related to Christian beliefs and practices, particularly the author's interpretation of scripture and critique of modern churches.

Key points from the document include:

- **Emphasis on house churches:** The author advocates for Christians to meet in independent house churches rather than established denominations to avoid heresy.
- **Critique of paid ministers:** The document argues against paid ministers, stating that they have no scriptural basis and that church funds should be used to support widows, orphans, and prisoners.
- **Authority of scripture:** The author emphasizes the Bible's authority and criticizes selective interpretation of its teachings.
- **Warning against Bible universities:** The document expresses skepticism towards ministers who attended Bible universities, citing Jesus's command not to call anyone "rabbi" or "teacher."
- **Disorderly conduct:** The author discusses the concept of "disorderly conduct" in the context of those who refuse to work and support their families, including paid ministers in their view.
- **Rejection of the Levitical priesthood analogy:** The document refutes the argument that modern ministers should be supported like Levitical priests of the Old Testament.

In essence, the document presents a specific interpretation of Christian teachings, advocating for a return to what the author believes is the early Church's original model.

Dear Friends,

Introduction: A Precarious Situation.

Be sober and vigilant, for your adversary, the devil, seeks to devour you like a lion. This message may come across as cynical, but I cannot ignore the precarious situation we find ourselves in. We are at the end of the world, and countless denominations teach a multitude of different doctrines, making the situation incomprehensible. Every Church is divided from every other Church, except under the guise of ecumenism. This promotes the idea that we should overlook each other's doctrinal differences in the name of unity and tolerate these differences.

The Early Church Model vs. Established Institutions.

I emphasize that Jesus warned us to be aware of the teachings of religious leaders. When the apostles started the Church, they could have chosen to be disciples of the rabbis in established synagogues. However, that was not the path they took. The disciples of Jesus Christ, who began the churches around the Roman Empire, chose to follow the apostolic doctrine and started house churches. They remained separate from the Jewish synagogues.

While rabbis had many valuable teachings that were beneficial, early Christians did not gather in synagogues; instead, they met in homes. They were not disciples of the rabbis and distinguished themselves from Judaism and the established institutional Church of Israel by meeting in houses. This choice laid the foundation for the Church, and the gates of Hell cannot prevail against it.

Deviation in Modern Churches and the Need for Separation.

Modern-day churches have strayed from this foundation. If we were to meet in houses that are not connected through a denomination but independent, each with its own elder and deacon, we would be returning to the original model established by Christ and the Apostles.

Each Church is quarantined, much like during COVID-19 when people were on lockdown to prevent the virus from spreading from house to house. While Christians are called to love one another, that's not the type of separation I'm referring to.

Quarantine from Heresy.

What I'm suggesting is that if we gather in house churches, we are quarantined from heresy, false doctrines, and false prophets. We need to shield ourselves from other gospels. By shutting down platforms like YouTube, TikTok, and Facebook, as well as avoiding all sermons, we can protect ourselves from the various teachings that are out there. Instead, we should focus on forming house churches to ensure we are safe from the infection of heresy. Heresy can be dangerous and could lead to condemnation on Judgment Day.

Understanding the Modern Christian Landscape.

I want to distinguish my message from the idea of unity among Christians and the love we have for one another. It's essential to highlight that we should not be gullible or carried away by every wind of doctrine. Today, my message may seem cynical. Still, I want to share my views on the modern Christian landscape, including the various institutional churches and denominations, as well as the ministers who are paid to deliver sermons and have attended Bible universities.

Critique of Paid Ministers.

I want to surprise those who may not have heard my perspective: I advise avoiding ministers who are paid to preach sermons. Why? First, a pastor, bishop, elder, and presbyter all refer to the same office; there is no scriptural example of elders delivering paid sermons. In fact, we read that financial support should only be extended to individuals who are in prison and unable to work for themselves. In the first century, if someone was imprisoned, it was typically their loved ones and friends who supplied for their needs, or else they went hungry.

Support for Prisoners in the Early Church.

The Roman Empire did not provide food or clothing for prisoners. This was the case during the time of Paul, Timothy, and the early evangelists who traveled to spread their message. As a result of their faithful ministry, they were often imprisoned. They relied on house churches to meet their needs, such as providing a coat to keep them warm or money for food. Unfortunately, many of these house churches overlooked the Apostle Paul's needs during his imprisonment. According to Scripture, only the Philippians extended their support to him.

Paul's Example: Self-Sufficiency.

Under normal circumstances, Paul did not ask for donations. He was a tentmaker by trade, which allowed him to support himself and also provide for his companions who traveled with him for years. He set an example by not wanting to give anyone the impression that he preached Christ for monetary gain. Therefore, whenever he was free to travel as an evangelist, he worked hard to provide for himself. He instructed the churches he established to do the same. He urged the men in these house churches to find work to support their families and, by extension, to care for widows and orphans who had no earthly support after losing their husbands.

True Religion: Caring for the Needy.

James pointed out that true religion is caring for widows and orphans. This care is essential because they often lack any support, much like prisoners in the first century. Offerings

collected on the first day of the week were to aid those without other means of support. This is what money was intended for.

Biblical Use of Church Funds.

Elders, who were non-disabled men, were expected to have jobs to support their families and, in turn, assist widows and orphans resulting from the loss of spouses. Additionally, house churches contributed financial assistance to other churches facing difficulties, such as famine. For example, a famine had been prophesied that would affect many across the Roman Empire, especially in Jerusalem. Collections were taken on the first day of the week and sent to Jerusalem to help those struggling during this crisis.

Contrast with Modern Compensation Practices.

This trend highlights that money was primarily used to assist individuals who could not support themselves. However, when possible, individuals were expected to support themselves through employment and take care of their families.

In contrast, consider modern-day elders, often referred to as pastors or ministers. Generally, they lead worship services once or twice a week, which may involve only a few hours of work and some additional hours of preparation. During the rest of the week, they have a lot of free time and are often not employed in jobs that support their families. Instead, they may rely on funds from church collections, commonly referred to as the widow and orphan fund. These funds were originally intended for those with no means of support, such as evangelists in prison or widows and orphans.

Departure from the Apostolic Model.

The early house churches founded by Peter, Paul, and Apollos collected this money specifically for those in need, not for non-disabled men who were simply elders of the Church. The expectation was not to pay for all the expenses of the elders in these house churches. What we see today with paid clergy is contrary to what is found in Scripture. Many of these men are not struggling to provide for themselves; they are instead living out what Paul refers to as disorderly conduct. They may feel free to avoid work and depend on church offerings during the week.

The Authority of Scripture.

It's important to understand that what I'm sharing isn't just a recommendation; it is a commandment from the Apostle Paul. He stated that his writings are the commandments of God. If you read Paul's letters and view his commandments as optional, then you are not interpreting them correctly. The New Testament should be approached with the understanding that it is authoritative and carries greater weight than any earthly authority.

Disrespectful Bible Interpretation.

Unfortunately, many people read the Bible disrespectfully, sifting through its teachings to claim some are applicable while disregarding others. They may follow the teachings they like and ignore those they don't. This selective approach undermines the authority of Scripture.

Foundation for Studying Scripture.

The foundation for studying the Scriptures must include recognizing that the Bible is the Word of God and is authoritative. Christ is the head of the Church, and one of His titles is the Word of God. The Word became flesh, and the Holy Spirit inspired the Scriptures so we can know God, His Son Jesus Christ, and His will for our lives.

It is essential to establish that the Bible is inspired and holds greater authority than anyone on Earth. When reading the writings of the apostles, remember that they are not merely human commandments but divine commandments from God, inspired by the Holy Spirit.

Commandment Regarding Disorderly Conduct.

Now that we have laid this foundation, let's return to our discussion. Paul commanded that if a man is walking disorderly—in this context, referring to a man unwilling to work and provide for his family—then do not associate with him. In other words, expel him from the church community until he finds employment. Paul stated that anyone who does not work and provide for their family is worse than an infidel.

Consequences of Refusal to Work.

This is not an optional message. The Apostle Paul commands that if anyone in the Church is living disorderly—refusing to work and take care of their family—you must cease fellowship with him. Expel him from the Church until he corrects this behavior.

Paid Ministers as Disorderly.

So far, we have discussed that paid ministers are behaving disorderly. They are relying on funds intended for widows and orphans while refusing to work. Despite delivering a sermon once or twice a week, they expect a full-time salary, which is contrary to the Biblical model where elders were not compensated or had their expenses covered simply for being elders.

Biblical Instruction on Supporting Families.

The apostle Paul instructed the House church that men should have jobs and take care of their own families. Families should not be a burden on the Church. Paul gave explicit instructions that collections were meant to support widows and orphans—those who could not provide for themselves, especially during times when other churches were experiencing famines. This is what the Bible teaches about money, and it's quite straightforward.

Consequences of Fellowship with Disorderly Men.

To be candid, if a man refuses to work and expects to receive a full-time salary simply for preaching a sermon once a week, then, according to Scripture, I am not allowed to fellowship with him. I cannot share a meal with him. When the Bible discusses avoiding eating with someone, it specifically refers to avoiding sharing the Lord's Supper with that person. This means you should not participate in communion with someone who won't work, who refuses to get a job and labor with his own hands to provide for himself and his family. Doing so would be a violation of one of the commandments given by the apostle Paul.

Paid Ministers and False Prophets.

Furthermore, it's important to note that there are men in ministry who expect a full-time salary, and these individuals often fall under the description of false prophets. Study the New Testament accounts of false prophets. You will find that they tend to expect a full-time salary and, in fact, often demand an excessive amount of wealth for holding their office or performing ministry in the name of Jesus Christ. So, if someone is being paid to be in ministry, I am inclined to assume that they are a false prophet because the Bible warns that these individuals pursue ministry for financial gain.

False Prophets vs. Elders and Deacons.

On one hand, the New Testament clearly describes false prophets who preach Christ for "filthy lucre's" sake—meaning for money. On the other hand, we have elders and deacons, the only two offices in the House church. There is no example in the New Testament of elders and deacons receiving a full-time salary simply for occupying these positions. These roles were voluntary, and they held no authority outside of their own House church. Their office as Elder or Deacon was specifically for that individual House church, serving a small number of people who gathered in a living room to engage in discussion together.

The Role of Elders in the Early Church.

Elders were not the center of attention. They did not preach sermons, nor were they compensated for their position. Instead, they voluntarily served the house church out of love, not for money but for the love of Christ and His Church, which met in someone's home or perhaps from house to house.

Skepticism Towards Bible University Graduates.

The next point I want to share may surprise many people. If your paid minister has gone to a Bible university, I am skeptical of them. I won't listen to their teachings or sermons. Why? Because I am a Christian, I believe that the teachings of Jesus Christ are the commandments of God. Jesus is the Lord; He is the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords. He is not merely making suggestions; His teachings are commands that deserve to be obeyed.

Approaching the Gospels with Respect.

You must approach the Gospels with a healthy respect for Jesus Christ. If you don't start with the understanding that Jesus is the head of the Church and has authority as the King of Kings, then you might as well stop reading the Bible. If you approach the teachings of Jesus with an attitude that allows you to pick and choose what to follow, you're just creating a version of Jesus in your imagination. On Judgment Day, you will meet the real Jesus, not the one you've imagined. You won't encounter a custom-made Jesus who caters to your whims; rather, you will face Jesus and everything He taught.

Following Jesus and the Apostles, Not Men.

So, why don't I listen to ministers who have attended Bible university? It's because, as a Christian, I am commanded not to make any man my rabbi or teacher. Instead, I am called to study the Scriptures and follow Jesus Christ. I don't want to have any disciples or followers for myself. What I truly desire is for you to pick up your Bible and listen to Jesus above all else. I urge you to study His teachings and implement them, just as Mary at the wedding feast said, "Whatever He tells you to do, do it." That is my message: you should be following Jesus Christ.

Secondly, if you choose to follow anyone else, it should be the eyewitnesses, the apostles, who wrote the New Testament. Their writings represent the commandments of God. Outside of Jesus Christ and the apostles, I encourage you to be skeptical of every church father, minister, televangelist, and author. Anyone who is not an author of the New Testament should be viewed with caution.

Warning Against False Prophets and Secret Gatherings.

Jesus warned us about false prophets and false Christs. He said that if someone claims to possess Christ in a secret place, we should not go forth. In my small town of Arcadia, with around 8,000 residents, there's a church on almost every corner claiming to have Christ and inviting people to enter their private spaces to learn about Him. Jesus warned us that there would be many false Christs and prophets and instructed us not to go into secret rooms. Do not call anyone your rabbi or make any man your teacher; follow Christ.

Direct Access to Scripture.

Jesus Christ ordained the apostles, personally selecting them, including the apostle Paul. As followers, we ought to listen to the teachings of the apostles and Jesus Christ directly. We don't need an intercessor between us and the Bible.

Bible Universities Contradict Jesus' Command.

You might wonder why I don't listen to the teachings of people who have attended Bible universities. The reason is that they learned under certain professors, whom they refer to as

doctors, theologians, or scholars. The entire act of attending a Bible university and studying under a professor contradicts a clear commandment of Jesus Christ. He instructed us not to call anyone “rabbi.” I challenge you to reconcile this: Jesus said not to become anyone’s disciple. Yet, the very premise of attending a Bible university is to become a disciple of the professors there, effectively making them your rabbi. This situation violates the commandment given by Jesus Christ.

Distinction from Judaism and Synagogue Practices.

As a Christian, it’s important to recognize that the apostles and the early Church did not attend the synagogues or learn from the teachings of the rabbis. Jesus warned against learning from the Pharisees, Sadducees, scribes, and lawyers. He explicitly told his disciples to avoid these sources of learning.

Early Church Gatherings and Leadership.

In the early Church, there was a clear distinction between Christians and Jews. Christians separated themselves and met in homes, where they had elders and deacons who were not financially compensated for their service. They served their local house church, which typically consisted of less than 35 people. Just like everyone else, they sat on the floor in the living room. These individuals were not the center of attention and did not deliver sermons; the practice of bishops giving sermons began in the 4th century, which is a historical fact.

Contrast with Modern Church Structures and Lifestyles.

There were no pulpit or pews in these gatherings. Everyone participated equally; they discussed matters, sang together, prayed together, and shared meals. No one person dominated the proceedings. This is why it makes sense that the early Church did not single out someone like an elder for a full-time salary or to cover extravagant expenses. There was no push to ensure anyone had a lavish lifestyle, like buying a mansion or a \$35 million jet for extravagant vacations around the world.

Example of Extravagance.

Benny Hinn is known to stay at some of the most expensive hotels in the world, particularly in Dubai, where he stays on the top floor, which costs \$1 million a night. This extravagant lifestyle is a common practice for him. However, the Scriptures teach that we should collect for people experiencing poverty, including widows and orphans. Benny Hinn is living a life that would make kings blush, and he is doing so by relying on funds meant for widows and orphans.

Discernment Regarding Paid Ministry.

The Bible warns us about false prophets who preach Christ for financial gain. If someone is receiving money for what they call ministry, I do not listen to them. Jesus cautioned us about false prophets and false Christs, instructing us not to heed their calls.

Application of Scriptural Commands.

We should have a healthy respect for the Bible as the Word of God. When Jesus and the apostles issue commands, we ought to follow their teachings and apply them to our lives. In the case of someone who is being paid for ministry, much like false prophets do, we must be discerning. If rabbis have taught a person and they merely mimic their teachings without original thought, we must be cautious. The Bible instructs us not to associate with such individuals. If they refuse to work with their hands, despite being capable, the Bible advises us not to eat with them and to reject them from our homes.

Addressing the Levitical Priesthood Argument.

Preaching a message like this positions me against every minister on the planet. I don't expect anyone in ministry to support or agree with my perspective; in fact, I anticipate they will oppose it vehemently. One argument they might raise is that the Levitical priests were supported by tithes collected from all of Israel, suggesting that ministers today should also be supported in this way.

The Abolishment of the Old Covenant.

However, this argument is flawed. The Levitical priests performed services at the temple, which was abolished in 70 AD when the temple was destroyed. The sacrifice of Jesus Christ fulfilled all the services that the temple represented. We no longer need priests to offer animal sacrifices or perform cleansing rituals. Everything the temple stood for has been satisfied and fulfilled through the one offering of Jesus Christ, allowing everyone, not just the Levitical priests, to have their sins washed away through direct faith in Him. We do not require an intercessor standing between us and God to perform services at a temple or sanctuary. The entire system established by the Law of Moses has been abolished.

The Church is Not Israel.

Every individual is capable of hearing the gospel, believing in it, and, by the grace of God, responding with repentance, water baptism, and receiving the Holy Spirit. They can be sealed until the day of redemption and bear fruit. Everyone can do this without a Levitical priest. The pastor preaching a sermon is not a priest in the sense of the law of Moses. We need to understand that the old covenant has been abolished; it is no longer in effect. We are not the nation of Israel; we are Christians—the Church.

Tithes were for the Levitical Priests at the Temple.

The nation of Israel collected tithes from all that they produced and gave those tithes to the Levitical priests, who were set apart to perform duties and services at the sanctuary. That system no longer exists; the temple was destroyed in 70 AD. If you want to give a tithe, there is no one to give it to, as tithes were commanded to be given to Levitical priests at the temple.

Absence of Levitical Priests Today.

If you go to Jerusalem looking for the temple, you won't find it. Search the world over for Levitical priests, and you won't find them. Their genealogical records were destroyed when the temple was destroyed, making it impossible for anyone to trace their lineage back to Aaron or Levi. Without genealogical records to verify descent from the tribe of Levi, there are no Levitical priests. Therefore, if you want to give a tithe, you would need to find a Levite. Your minister is not a Levite; if he claims he is, ask for genealogical records proving he can trace his ancestry back to the tribe of Levi. If he cannot provide that proof, you do not owe him a tithe.

May God's grace and peace be with you.

In Jesus Christ's name. Amen.

Mr. David Michael Curtis

Your Adversary the Devil, as a Roaring Lion—Part 2.

By David Michael Curtis

"Your Adversary the Devil, as a Roaring Lion, Walketh About, Seeking Whom He May Devour—Part 2.pdf" is an article written by David Michael Curtis.

The document discusses several key points:

- **Paid Ministers vs. Unpaid Elders and Deacons:** The document argues that elders and deacons in the early Church were not paid, whereas paid ministers are a modern concept. It questions the use of the scripture "the laborer is worthy of his hire" to justify salaries for church leaders.
- **False Shepherds and True Men of God:** It distinguishes between those who are called pastors and those who truly follow the Bible's teachings. True men of God must obey, study, and follow the Bible, not just deliver good teachings.
- **Reliance on Christ vs. Human Teachers:** The document emphasizes relying on Christ and the Holy Spirit for guidance rather than intermediaries or human teachers. It cautions against ministers who demand unquestioning obedience and assert authority superior to others.
- **Financial Motivations of Paid Ministers:** It suggests that paid ministers might be inclined to defend their position due to financial reliance on church offerings.
- **House Churches vs. Institutional Churches:** The article promotes the idea of gathering in house churches rather than attending institutional churches, suggesting that house churches protect families from "heresy" and "false teachings."
- **Personal Study of the Bible:** It encourages individuals to study the Bible for themselves and verify teachings with scripture, following the example of the Bereans in Acts 17:11.
- **The Danger of Heresy:** The document likens heresy to a virus that spreads through false prophets and encourages individuals to protect their families from it.
- **Personal Experience and Unpaid Ministry:** David Michael Curtis shares his personal experience of choosing not to be a paid minister, working for a living (DoorDash), and sharing his teachings freely without asking for donations.
- **Critique of Bible Universities and Paid Sermons:** The article expresses concerns about ministers who have been educated at Bible universities and those who receive full-time salaries for delivering sermons.

- **Rejection of Denomination Building:** David Michael Curtis explains that he intentionally avoids starting a new denomination and does not seek personal gain from his teachings.

In essence, the document advocates for a return to what the author believes are the practices of the early Church, emphasizing personal Bible study, house churches, and unpaid ministry, while warning against false teachers and the influence of modern institutional churches.

Dear Friends,

Addressing "The Laborer is Worthy of His Hire."

Next, let's consider how a paid minister might respond to the argument that "the laborer is worthy of his hire." First, we should examine the context in which this was stated. The Apostle Paul was in a tight situation, imprisoned in Rome, where prisoners were not provided food. This warranted support from house churches.

Paid Ministers vs. Unpaid Elders and Deacons.

It's important to note that elders and deacons in the early Church were not paid; they did not receive a salary. In fact, in modern churches, those considered elders and deacons typically volunteer their service and consider it an honor to serve in those roles. They do not expect to be compensated. The only individuals who typically expect payment are ministers and administrators.

Misapplication of Scripture for Compensation.

Therefore, using the argument that "the laborer is worthy of his hire" does not effectively support the idea that elders and deacons should receive salaries. If one concludes that elders and deacons ought to be paid and receive full-time salaries, then all elders and deacons worldwide should begin to receive such salaries. However, I am not aware of any churches that follow this practice; none that I know of provide salaries for these offices.

The Role of a Pastor and False Shepherds.

A pastor is essentially a shepherd. The term "pastor" refers to someone who guides and cares for a congregation, much like a shepherd does for their flock. However, it's important to recognize that there are false shepherds and false prophets among those who claim to be pastors. Just because someone is called a pastor doesn't mean God ordains them; men have ordained many.

Obeying the Bible, Not Human Teachers.

To be a true man of God requires more than simply delivering good teachings from a pulpit. A man of God must obey the Bible, study it diligently, and follow its teachings. Jesus and the Apostle Paul emphasized that we should not rely on rabbis or teachers in the traditional sense; instead, we should go directly to Christ as the head of the Church. Our dependence should be on Christ and the Holy Spirit, who will guide us into all truth, rather than through an intermediary.

Financial Motivations of Paid Ministers.

A paid minister may feel inclined to defend their position, especially if they have purchased homes, lands, enjoyed vacations, and acquired the latest cars and technology, all funded through offerings from the Church or their followers. This financial reliance may create a reluctance to suggest that they should take on other work to support themselves.

Evaluating Teachers: Compensation and Authority.

In evaluating Bible teachers, it is essential to consider whether they are being compensated for their role and whether they perceive themselves as having authority that is superior to that of others in the Church. A minister who expects unconditional obedience without question mirrors the mindset of the papacy, where church members are expected to follow their priests, bishops, cardinals, and the pope without question.

The Berean Example of Scriptural Verification.

The Apostle Paul provided a different example in Acts 17:11, where he taught, but the Bereans studied the Scriptures to verify whether his teachings were accurate. Paul encouraged this kind of scrutiny. A pastor or minister should not feel threatened by congregants studying Scripture to confirm the truth of their teachings, as Paul welcomed this practice.

Ministers Demanding Unquestioning Obedience.

Unfortunately, I have encountered ministers who insist that we must accept their beliefs and follow their directives solely based on their authority, rather than on the truth of Scripture. Jesus reminded us that we are all brethren and equal, stating that to be the greatest, one must be the servant of all. The apostles demonstrated humility and meekness, while anyone displaying superiority, authority, or a dictatorial attitude, insisting on unquestioning obedience, follows the example of the papacy.

My Beliefs and Encouragement for Personal Study.

I want to clarify my beliefs: I'm not a Roman Catholic; I'm a Bible student. I believe that Jesus is the head of the Church and that the Bible is the ultimate authority for Christians. I encourage everyone to study the Bible for themselves. If I share something new with you and

you're unsure about it, that's perfectly fine. I don't expect anyone to believe it just because I said so, nor do I expect everyone to agree with my interpretations.

Verifying Teachings with Scripture.

However, if you are a Bible student and I present something unfamiliar, I encourage you to study the scriptures like the Bereans did, to see if what I'm saying aligns with the Bible. I want to emphasize the benefits of following Jesus' commandments. If you look at the example in the New Testament, particularly regarding house churches, you'll see that they operated separately from synagogues or institutional churches.

Benefits of House Churches and Avoiding Paid Teachers.

I suggest not relying solely on people who are paid to deliver sermons or who have studied under a rabbi—essentially, the professors. There's no harm in following Jesus' commandments. In fact, there's much benefit. Just as during the COVID-19 lockdown, you were avoiding exposure to a deadly virus, I would liken heresy to a virus as well, spread by false prophets.

Heresy as a Virus.

Am I saying that every paid minister is a false prophet? No, I'm not judging anyone. What I'm doing is teaching what the scriptures say and leaving judgment up to Christ on Judgment Day. I don't know who will be saved or lost, and I hold no ill feelings toward any ministers. I want to express what the Bible teaches and leave the rest to God.

Protecting Family from Heresy.

I encourage you to visualize heresy as a virus. Right now, millions of people are being infected by heretical doctrines. I'm encouraging you to meet in homes to protect your family and loved ones from this heretical virus and to shield them from false teachings. The spread of these heretical ideas is happening faster than a pandemic, fueled by false teachers who are compensated to spread their misleading doctrines.

Safety in House Churches.

If you gather in homes with your family and loved ones and stop listening to mainstream sermons, there is no danger or harm in doing so. In fact, you will benefit by protecting yourself from the spread of false ideas. This approach is not something I invented; it is based on the teachings of the great physician, Christ. The Apostles laid the foundation for house churches, which were established when Jesus taught that we should not call anyone a rabbi. In its most direct context, this meant that early Christians were not to sit under the authority of rabbis in Jewish synagogues.

The Remedy for Heresy: Avoiding Human Rabbis.

To follow this commandment, Christians needed to separate themselves from Jews who met in synagogues and began to gather in house churches. Today, many institutional churches are perpetuating false doctrines that are divisive and filled with heresy. Jesus, the great physician, provided the remedy by instructing us not to refer to anyone as a rabbi or teacher. When you attend an institutional church, you elevate the person at the pulpit to the status of your rabbi or teacher. Many who do this trust everything that person teaches, assuming that because they attended Bible school, they must be knowledgeable.

Clarity Through House Church Setting.

By removing yourself from this dynamic and placing yourself in a house church setting, the scriptures become clearer. Their meanings are easier to understand, and you will see that the Bible accurately describes the world we live in today. The Bible's warnings against false Christs, false prophets, and false teachers accurately portray many modern institutional churches and provide instructions on how to navigate this challenging environment.

Survival Guide: Stop Listening to False Teachers.

To survive this situation, we must stop listening to their teachings, sermons, and books. We should treat these ideas like a pandemic, similar to COVID-19, because that is precisely what is happening: the world is becoming infected with heresies and doctrines of devils. Many people are being reassured of their salvation when they haven't repented, and many haven't even been baptized. This is ultimately between each individual and God, and we're not here to judge anyone.

Following Christ and Separation from the World.

We are simply trying to follow Christ. He wants us to survive in a world that seeks to engulf us, encouraging us to be separate from it. You can look at what the world defines as the Church and realize that it does not align with Scripture, and you can distance yourself from institutional churches and establish a healthy home church.

Treating Heresy as Dangerous.

You should view heresy as something dangerous that your family needs protection from. By ceasing to listen to these sermons and teachings, you can keep your family safe. If someone is being paid to deliver sermons and refuses to get a job to support their family, they are acting in disorder. There is no example in Scripture of elders and deacons having full-time salaries. The concept of labor being worthy of its hire is specifically in reference to Paul when he was in prison, relying on contributions from the Philippian Church to avoid starvation.

Personal Experience and Survival Strategy.

To conclude, everything I've shared reflects my experience in surviving a world filled with heresies and false teachers who represent different versions of Christ and different gospels. I am managing just fine because I have chosen not to be influenced by them. I no longer listen to their sermons or watch their YouTube videos. This applies to local pastors as well—I do not attend their churches or allow myself to be indoctrinated by their teachings.

Following Christ, Not Human Teachers or Paid Ministers.

I follow Christ's commandments and do not allow anyone to take the place of my teacher. I do not trust those who accept money from the widow and orphan fund to preach, nor do I accept teachings from those who have merely repeated what they learned from professors. I do not follow rabbis; I am not anyone's disciple. I am a follower of Jesus Christ. I go directly to the Bible, listen to the apostles, and respect the Bible as authoritative.

Humility as a Bible Student.

I believe the Bible holds more authority than anything I have ever written or preached. If I am wrong, I must forsake that teaching, repent, and align my understanding with Scripture. I do not approach the Bible as a teacher but rather as a student. I am not special; I hold no titles. I am just David, a Bible student. I study the King James Bible, focusing on doctrinal topics.

Accessibility of Truth.

There is nothing remarkable about me; anyone can do this. No one needs my teachings, writings, or sermons. Everything I have done in my lifetime could be forgotten, and the truth will remain in the King James Bible. God does not need me to share these truths; He has the Bible and the Holy Spirit, which are available worldwide. Topical resources like Nave's Topical Bible can be used everywhere and in any language through various Bible apps.

Why Paid Ministers Won't Teach This.

What I am pointing out may seem obvious to me through topical Bible study, but that clarity may not be evident to others who are accustomed to passively listening to sermons. Paid ministers are unlikely to teach the things I have discussed today because they will fiercely protect their income.

Target Audience: New Believers and Those Willing to Change.

This message was not intended for ministers or members of institutional churches. I do not expect them to change anything; I anticipate that they will continue as they always have. I do not believe that old wineskins can hold new wine. My audience is brand-new believers who have not yet formed the habits of passively attending Church or listening to sermons.

Putting Principles into Practice: Starting House Churches.

I am speaking to those who are willing to put these principles into practice—who would start a house church and isolate themselves from heresy. I encourage them to prevent themselves and their families from being tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine and to follow Christ, warding off the leaven of the Pharisees that may influence their understanding of the Bible.

The Effect of Leaven on Understanding.

Those who are already members of churches have allowed their understanding of the Bible to become leavened. I am not directing my message solely toward institutional churches, their ministers, or their members. I'm content to leave them alone. Jesus told the Pharisees that they claimed to understand the truth; therefore, they remained in their sins. He did not feel a burden to correct the Pharisees' theology. Instead, He was content to let them believe and teach whatever they wished.

Jesus' Prayer for His Disciples: Purity and Separation.

Jesus did not pray for the world; He prayed for His disciples, asking that they be kept pure from the world and not influenced by it so that they could remain separate. Through that separation, they would find unity and love for one another.

Message for Those Willing to Follow Christ.

My message is aimed at those willing to follow Christ and believe in what the Bible teaches. Some individuals have anchored themselves to a sinking ship, unwilling to leave. If you desire to follow Christ, consider His greatest sermon, which He preached from a mountain. During the Dark Ages, for 1,260 days, the woman mentioned in Revelation 12 fled into the wilderness. Why? Because the recognized institutional Church was persecuting her. The Church demanded that she submit to its doctrines and authority. To remain steadfast in the doctrine of Christ, she had to flee into the wilderness.

A Satirical Look at the Minister Profession.

If you're looking for a job that only requires a couple of hours a week but pays a full-time salary, potentially even making you wealthy, consider going to a Bible university to earn a degree in philosophy. This path can lead you to become an ordained minister who specializes in teaching within specific institutional churches, helping you live comfortably while only working a few hours each week.

The Appeal of Ministry.

It's no surprise that many people are drawn to the idea of becoming ministers. You can dress nicely, earn the respect of your congregation, and generally be viewed positively by your community. What's not to love?

Advice for True Disciples.

However, if you want to be a follower of Jesus Christ, I recommend avoiding Bible school and studying the Bible directly. If you want to understand doctrine, study it topically. To be a true disciple of Jesus, follow Paul's example: work for a living, get a job, take care of yourself and your family, and don't become a burden on others. Avoid taking money intended for widows and orphans, and set a good example for other men. Steer clear of individuals who refuse to work or support their families through their labor.

Caution Regarding Trained Ministers.

Be cautious of those who have been trained by rabbis and are simply repeating what professors have taught them. Please don't listen to their teachings or pay them for sermons that aren't scriptural and may even contradict biblical teachings.

Judgment is With God.

Ultimately, we will either be inside the city of God or outside of it. My opinion doesn't hold much weight, and I'm not here to judge or condemn anyone. I'm a Bible student sharing what I have learned from studying Scripture for myself, along with principles I live by.

Red Flags: Bible University and Paid Sermons.

If a minister has been educated at a Bible university, that raises a red flag for me. I tend not to listen to such individuals, as they often repeat the teachings of rabbis or, in modern terms, professors. Additionally, if someone is being paid a full-time salary to deliver sermons, I have further concerns. In the first-century house churches, elders were not paid salaries, and sermons did not originate in house churches; they emerged four centuries later under Constantine in the 4th century when he began building cathedrals.

Issues with Modern Church Structure.

We can identify several other issues as well. For instance, the existence of cathedrals or church buildings instead of house churches is a concern. The use of pews instead of gathering in a living room is another issue. Furthermore, the idea of passively listening to one person as the center of attention is problematic. In a house church, everyone participated; everyone talked to each other, exercised their spiritual gifts, and edified one another.

Early Church Participation vs. Passive Listening.

The notion that one person should receive all the attention while everyone else passively listens goes against the example we see in the Bible. The early Christians met in houses, not in Jewish synagogues, because they were separating from the institutional Church of Israel. They started something brand new, and their model was house churches, which we should strive to emulate.

My Unpaid Ministry.

This message is not about me; it's between you and God—the Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit—and the Bible has nothing to do with me. You and I might never meet in this life. However, I want to clarify that I am not paid a single cent for writing these letters. I do not receive any donations. I don't have a PayPal account or a Patreon account, and nobody is sending me money. I do not ask for donations. I'm sharing all of this freely.

Working for a Living

I have a job; I work and deliver food for a living through an app called DoorDash. I am struggling financially, and so I would benefit if people started sending me money, but that wouldn't align with Scripture. I am practicing what I preach. My job doesn't pay very well, and I rarely have a total of \$100 to my name. I'm not asking for assistance from anyone. I pay my bills and buy my food, and I teach others to do the same.

Waiting for the Inheritance.

My life is not glamorous. I don't take expensive vacations; I'm waiting for my inheritance at the Second Coming. When that happens, I hope to be an angel, able to travel freely. I want to emphasize that I could live my life quite differently if I chose to. I was a literature evangelist for years, going door to door to introduce Christian books and Bibles to families. I'm comfortable speaking to strangers, and it would be easy for me to introduce myself as a minister starting a local church and invite them to attend.

Avoiding a Paid Ministry Path.

I could build a congregation, encourage tithing, and receive offerings, working just a few hours a week for good pay. However, that would violate my conscience, set a bad example, and ultimately make me accountable on Judgment Day. I am committed to following Jesus Christ, with no turning back, even if that means working for DoorDash, earning little money, and waiting for the Second Coming to enjoy life's comforts and pleasures. I am willing to wait and share what I learn from the Bible freely, without asking for donations.

Rejecting False Arguments for Payment.

I could point to verses such as “the laborer is worthy of his hire” or discuss how tithes supported the Levitical priest, but I know those arguments would not line up with Scripture. I would be teaching something false. Instead, I offer what I have learned freely on Google Drive. I don't have a like button to indicate how many people have appreciated my articles, nor do I have statistics on how many people have read them. I won't know the results until Judgment Day, so I ask you to consider that.

Criticism as Evidence of Following Christ.

I'm not getting paid to share these things with you. In fact, by sharing them, I am often criticized and not popular. Jesus said that if I follow Him, I would be hated by all men for His sake, which I take as evidence that I am on the right track. Sharing ideas that upset the world confirms that I am following the right path, and I am not discouraged by the criticism.

Contrast with Paid Ministers and Denomination Building.

I want to highlight the contrast between my approach and that of paid ministers who receive full-time salaries. I could go door to door, start a local congregation, and even continue establishing more congregations, making myself the central teacher. I could require that all the churches I start send me a portion of their offerings, effectively creating a new denomination. However, I am intentionally avoiding that path.

Uncompensated Sharing of Truth.

My preaching does not support me in any way. I don't earn a single cent from writing my letters, my eBooks, or sharing anything on YouTube. So there you have it. Once again, I want to reiterate that this is not about me at all; this is between you, God, and the Holy Bible. Like Paul, I am following the teachings I share in that I do not live off donations. I do not ask for them, nor do I have a means for you to send them. I work for a living and eat my bread.

May God's grace and peace be with you.

In Jesus Christ's name. Amen.

Mr. David Michael Curtis

Fire Your Pastor, and Tell Him to Get a Job—Part 1

By David Michael Curtis

The document "Fire Your Pastor, and Tell Him to Get a Job—Part 1" by David Michael Curtis argues that modern church practices, particularly the practice of paying pastors and having them deliver sermons, deviate from the practices described in the Book of Acts and the teachings of the Apostle Paul.

Here are the key points:

- **Early Church Practices:** The document emphasizes that early Christians met in house churches, where elders did not deliver sermons but rather oversaw the gathering and safeguarded against heresy. Everyone participated, sharing their gifts. Deacons were responsible for distributing offerings to widows and orphans.
- **Role of Elders:** Elders, also referred to as bishops or pastors, were expected to have regular jobs and support their families. They were not paid from church offerings. The document cites 2 Thessalonians 3:6-11 and 1 Timothy 5:8 to support this.
- **Offerings:** Offerings were intended for widows, orphans, and traveling evangelists, not for supporting local elders.
- **Historical Discrepancies:** The document states that institutional churches, the practice of bishops delivering sermons, and pews are later developments that began in the fourth century with Constantine and evolved over time.
- **Against Modern Practices:** It criticizes the modern practice of pastors being paid to deliver sermons, arguing that this is not scriptural and detracts from the original purpose of offerings. The author suggests that pastors should find employment and that church members should participate more actively in gatherings.
- **Communal Living:** The document distinguishes between biblical practices and communal living, noting that the Book of Acts reveals that early Christians maintained their own homes and held jobs.
- **Equality:** The document emphasizes the equality of all believers, including apostles and elders, and argues against the idea of a hierarchical structure with a superior leader.
- **Call to Action:** The author suggests that church members should consider "firing" their pastor and encourage them to seek employment elsewhere.

In essence, the document advocates for a return to what the author believes are the original biblical practices of church gatherings, leadership, and the use of offerings.

Dear friends,

Church Leadership and Practices

Fire your pastor and encourage him to find a job instead of relying on funds meant for orphans and widows. In the book of Acts, we see the roles of apostles and deacons established in the early chapters. The apostles preached both at the temple and from house to house, and the church continued to adhere to their doctrine. What was their doctrine? It consisted of the foundational teachings that Christ laid out, which are listed in Hebrews 6:1-2. These include turning from sin, trusting God, and being baptized.

The Purpose of the Temple and the Role of Deacons

First, we need to understand the purpose of the temple where the apostles taught, which was to make atonement for the sins of Israel. This atonement was achieved through annual animal sacrifices performed by the high priest on the Day of Atonement. The apostles and deacons preached that atonement was now possible only through the blood of Christ and that forgiveness of sins was no longer attainable through the law of Moses. This is why the leaders of Israel were so upset with the apostles and deacons, frequently accusing them of teaching against the law of Moses.

So, what were the duties of a deacon? The office of deacon was established so that the apostles could focus on teaching and preaching. Deacons were responsible for taking the offerings collected and distributing them to widows and orphans, ensuring that the apostles could concentrate on their teaching without distraction. In contrast to modern deacons, who are often seen as responsible for minor tasks, such as vacuuming carpets in institutional churches, the deacons in the Book of Acts had significant responsibilities in assisting the needy.

The Source of Offerings and the Doctrine of the Nicolaitans

Where did this money come from? It came from new converts who sold their houses and lands and laid the proceeds at the feet of the apostles. One of the seven deacons mentioned was named Nicholas, after whom the doctrine of the Nicolaitans is named in the Book of Revelation. This serves as a warning that even men who had their hands laid on them and were appointed to an office by the apostles could fall into apostasy and become leaders of false doctrines condemned by Jesus in His messages to the seven churches in Revelation.

Apostasy and the Importance of Marital Fidelity

Therefore, we should not assume that everyone ordained, even by apostles, is a true man of God. Someone can fall into apostasy through sexual immorality. The doctrine of the Nicolaitans, for example, stemmed from Nicholas's decision to stop having sexual relations with his wife. In contrast, the Apostle Paul taught that husbands are to show due

benevolence to their wives, love them, and cherish their bodies. Paul emphasized the importance of meeting their wives' needs. Nicholas's doctrine eventually contributed to the idea of celibacy in the priesthood, which forbade marriage.

Elders and House Churches

Let us return to our topic today: Fire your pastor and encourage him to find a job instead of relying on funds meant for orphans and widows. House churches began to emerge after the Day of Pentecost when 3,000 people were converted during the preaching of the 120 in various languages. If we assume there were thirty men per house, that would mean 1,000 house churches started on that very first day. That is a substantial number of house churches!

The early Christians had ample resources to construct buildings because many of those 3,000 sold their houses and lands, laying the proceeds at the apostles' feet. However, they did not use that money to build institutional churches. From the very beginning, Christians met in homes and did not use offerings to construct buildings.

Each house church had an elder appointed to oversee it. While the elder was capable of teaching, the practice of an elder delivering sermons on Sunday mornings did not begin until the fourth century. During that time, Constantine started constructing basilicas and cathedrals. A cathedral is the house of the cathedra, which is the chair of the Bishop. The Bishop would sit in the cathedral while everyone else stood and listened to his sermon. This practice, rooted in tradition, originated in the fourth century and lacks a scriptural basis.

The Role of Elders and the Expectation of Labor

The terms "elder," "bishop," and "pastor" all refer to the same role, with no distinctions between them. During the first three centuries of the church, elders did not stand before the congregation or deliver sermons on Sunday mornings. Rather than this, elders would sit on the living room floor alongside everyone else. The elder was not the central figure and spoke neither more nor less than any other participant in the group. It would be unrealistic to expect that a special collection was made to cover the living expenses of elders who shared a space on the floor of a home. While scriptural evidence supports the notion that the church was to assist traveling evangelists and apostles, particularly during times of imprisonment when they lacked necessities, there is no scriptural basis for the church to pay an "elder," "bishop," and "pastor" or be responsible for their living costs. The pastor is not a Levite priest, meaning we do not owe him a tenth of our income.

An elder, like any other church member, was expected to have employment to meet his expenses and mortgage obligations and support his family. The Apostle Paul asserted that if

an elder chose not to work, he would be deemed as “walking disorderly.” Paul stated that we should avoid associations with those who refuse to work or provide for their families.

2 Thessalonians 3:6-11 NIV

6. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, we command you, brothers and sisters, to keep away from every believer who is idle and disruptive and does not live according to the teaching you received from us.

7. For you yourselves know how you ought to follow our example. We were not idle when we were with you,

8. nor did we eat anyone's food without paying for it. On the contrary, we worked night and day, laboring and toiling so that we would not be a burden to any of you.

9. We did this not because we do not have the right to such help but in order to offer ourselves as a model for you to imitate.

10. For even when we were with you, we gave you this rule: "The one who is unwilling to work shall not eat."

11. We have heard that some among you are idle and disruptive. They are not busy; they are busybodies.

Does the Bible teach that "a laborer is worthy of his hire?" Yes, it does. Did offerings support men in the ministry? Yes, those were apostles and evangelists who traveled and spread the Gospel. A modern application would be to support missionaries working in famine-stricken regions, who often have less than \$150 a month in support. The offerings were not given to the local elders.

While on his travels, Paul crafted tents to sustain himself and encouraged all the men in the churches he founded to work and support their families. He stressed that anyone who fails to work and care for his family is worse than someone who does not believe. The men, including elders, in the churches established by Paul were taught to work, provide for themselves, and care for their families.

1 Timothy 5:8 But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.

False prophets preach Christ for the sake of greed. In contrast, the elders in the Bible had jobs; they were not paid to teach but instead worked, earned their bread, and took care of their families. Is your pastor being paid to teach? Is he willing to stop taking money from the widows and orphans fund, get a job, and still share his doctrines without being paid to do so?

Communal Living vs. Biblical Practices

A few blocks from where I am driving right now, there is a communal living house owned by the Yellow Deli people. Everyone who lives there works for no pay; they do not earn any money and practice communal living. They believe they are following the principles described in the Book of Acts. However, the Book of Acts does not describe communal living; instead, it shows that everyone had their own house, worked, earned money, and took care of themselves and their families.

In Acts 2-3, we see that the early Christians went from house to house, indicating that each family lived in a different home. The wealthier families did sell some houses; they kept a home for their family to live in. The Apostle Paul emphasized the importance of working to support one's family, stating that anyone who does not provide for them is worse than an unbeliever.

The Yellow Deli is not Christian; it is a cult that originated in the 1970s. The Yellow Deli staff work slavish hours but practice communal living without compensation for their labor. They send all the profits made at the local Yellow Deli to Australia, where others manage the money. Meanwhile, these hippies work for free and own extraordinarily little—just personal items like toothbrushes, hairbrushes, and their wives. They do not share their wives or personal hygiene items, but everything else is collectively owned and not owned by any individual.

This practice does not align with what we read in the Book of Acts or the writings of the Apostle Paul. Each Christian family in the early church had its own home, occupation, and responsibilities to care for its own family. As God prospered them, any surplus they had after supporting their families and widows was given as a free offering each Sunday morning when they met in house churches. This money was used to support widows and orphans in the church who were unable to care for themselves.

Every man was expected to hold a job, and if they declined to do so, Paul directed that they should go without food and be excluded from fellowship. Thus, any man who “walketh disorderly,” refusing to work, faced disfellowshipping until he secured employment.

Modern Pastors and Historical Discrepancies

In many modern churches, there are individuals called pastors who often do not hold regular jobs. Instead, they rely on the offerings provided by the congregation on a weekly basis.

In DeSoto County, we have an independent Baptist minister who owns a significant amount of land and has built the largest house I have seen in the county. This has been made possible through the offerings at a Baptist church in Port Charlotte, which consists of approximately 200 families. This church is conservative and independent, using the King James Version of

the Bible. I would describe this pastor and his family as conservative. However, he does not have a job, nor does he support his family through labor. Instead, they are financially supported by the offerings of that church, which, biblically, ought to go to widows, orphans, and those experiencing homelessness and poverty. He is taking money that could feed widows and is not working to provide for his family himself.

What I am sharing is not debatable; it is a historical fact. It is well-documented that institutional churches were not established until the fourth century, during the time of Constantine. It is a well-known fact that the role of a bishop delivering sermons from a central stage in a cathedral dates back to the fourth century. During the first three hundred years of Christianity, believers met in homes and caves while hiding from the persecution of various Roman emperors.

In those early years, elders did not deliver sermons each Sunday morning. This is not a matter of interpretation; how your church interprets the Bible does not change history. A church could interpret the Bible to say that the sky was yellow, but it would not change the fact that the sky is blue.

The Evolution of Church Practices

In modern times, the roles of pastor and elder are distinguished as two different offices. However, in scripture, the pastor and elder were the same person holding the same office. During the first three hundred years, pastors or elders did not deliver sermons. The early church did not have members passively listening to sermons each Sunday; rather, they gathered in circles facing each other in a living room and actively engaged in conversation.

This practice is described in 1 Corinthians 12, where it states that everyone in the house church had different gifts and was to exercise those gifts each Sunday. Some would sing, some would pray, and others would edify the group. For instance, if someone spoke in a different language, an interpreter was responsible for translating that message. Imagine an English-speaking church where a person gifted in Chinese delivered a message in that language; someone with the gift of interpretation would then translate it into English.

These gatherings typically involved about 30 to 35 people sitting in the living room, facing each other and actively participating in the church community. The modern practice of passively facing a pulpit and listening to sermons is not indicative of true church tradition; this practice began in the fourth century. Additionally, the practice of sitting in pews did not begin until the 18th century.

During the Reformation, when many Roman Catholic churches transitioned to Protestant churches, Martin Luther would ascend a stairway to an elevated pulpit. At the same time, everyone else stood about ten feet lower on the ground floor. They did not sit in pews; rather,

they stood for the entire lecture delivered by Dr. Martin Luther. Aren't you glad you do not have to stand during the sermon, especially if the pastor preaches for over an hour? That method of worship continued until the 1700s.

The History of Pews

In the 18th century, wooden boxes were constructed and sold, becoming the property of wealthy church members. These boxes allowed individuals to step inside, close the door, and enjoy privacy. Many were carpeted, and people even brought their animals to church, sitting inside their boxes with them. After the service, they could lock these wooden boxes.

When we visit Christ Church, where the founding fathers of the United States attended for decades, we can see the pews that were purchased by them, which still bear their names, including those of Benjamin Franklin and George Washington. This was a shift from the wooden boxes, which were no longer in use. Later in the 1700s, wooden benches, now commonly referred to as pews, were developed.

This traditional seating arrangement, with everyone facing forward, encourages passive listening to the pastor's sermon. It disconnects us from one another and limits interaction.

The core purpose of the church was to edify one another, to exercise the spiritual gifts bestowed by the Holy Spirit, and to support fellow members with these gifts. In a pew, everyone remains silent, passively listening to a sermon, while only the speaker's gift is utilized, which is not scriptural.

The sermon, delivered from the pulpit, has a traditional foundation rooted in human doctrine, dating back to the fourth century. This is not open to interpretation. Regardless of how your church interprets different verses, this is a historical fact. You might consider firing your pastor and encouraging him to find employment instead of relying on funds meant for orphans and widows.

The Role of Elders and Deacons in Early Churches

In the first three centuries, the church began with gatherings in homes led by an elder and a deacon. The elder's role was to safeguard against heresy. If someone visited and preached false teachings, the elder would admonish that person once or twice and then avoid further interaction.

The church was intended to be organic, as noted by modern authors discussing house churches. This means that the elder was not the center of attention; instead, the congregation sat in a circle in a living room setting. One person might offer a prayer, another would share a psalm, and in turn, they could read from the letters of Paul or other apostles. The idea was that everyone participated, sharing their gifts and edifying one another.

However, by the second century, individuals began to identify themselves as church fathers, and they created new positions as overseers of multiple churches. These offices did not exist during the time the New Testament was being written. During the second and third centuries, autonomous house churches began sending offerings to these new “overseers” known as bishops. This new class of Bishops emerged in cities like Antioch and Alexandria, overseeing several cities consisting of dozens of house churches.

In the fourth century, bishops would preach while positioned on a cathedra (seat of authority) situated on an elaborately decorated platform at the front of the cathedral, where it was expected that everyone would listen passively. Thus, the tradition was born into history, replacing the active, vibrant, and engaging house churches that the apostles planted with dry and boring institutional churches.

False Apostles and the True Foundation of the Church

While the New Testament was being composed, false apostles were already traveling alongside the twelve apostles, including Paul. The Book of Revelation mentions that one of the seven churches rejected those who claimed to be apostles but were not. Similarly, in the second and third centuries, people claimed to be bishops without genuine authority, establishing positions that lacked a foundation during the apostolic era.

The New Testament indicates that no other foundation can be laid than the one that Christ and the apostles laid. The foundation laid by Christ and the apostles involved house churches, each led by an elder and a deacon. The deacon’s role was to distribute offerings to widows and orphans and assist those living in poverty. Their duties did not include mundane tasks like vacuuming carpets.

The elder was inclined to teach and acted as a shepherd, safeguarding the community from false teachings. He did not deliver sermons in the way we see today; instead, he sat in the living room alongside everyone else, remaining mostly quiet and intervening only to teach or confront heretics. If someone were teaching heresy, the elder would speak to them privately about their offense and then involve two or three others to address the issue, emphasizing the need for repentance. If the individual did not repent after one or two admonitions, they would be rejected from the house church and not permitted to return.

However, there were house churches that did not follow this pattern, and entire congregations were led astray by false teachers who infiltrated these homes and spread their heresies. Later, in the second century, some individuals emerged claiming to hold a special office, such as an overseer or bishop. They asserted authority over several churches and eventually over multiple cities of churches. This concept is a departure from the foundation laid by Christ and the apostles.

Equality Among Apostles and Elders

The idea that Peter is the chief shepherd is contrary to the original foundation established by Christ and the apostles. Jesus affirmed that the gates of Hell would not prevail against it. When we examine the first three chapters of 1 Corinthians, we see that Peter, Apollos, and Paul founded house churches. This text specifically addresses whether Peter was superior to the others. The apostle Paul instructed against divisions, stating that we were not baptized into Peter, Paul, or Apollos but rather into Christ. He emphasized that these three men were not crucified for us—Jesus was. He urged us to stop creating divisions among ourselves.

Therefore, the notion that there is a church founded by Peter that is superior to one founded by Paul is debunked in 1 Corinthians, chapters one through three. This issue is clearly discussed. The churches founded by Peter were not superior to those established by the other apostles. Such divisions were to be rejected.

Furthermore, both the Apostle Peter and the Apostle John identified themselves as elders, indicating that they were brothers and not superior to the other elders despite being apostles. Jesus taught that we are all equal and should regard one another as brothers and sisters in Christ. We are not to call anyone “Rabbi” or “Father,” nor should we view anyone as holding a holy office that is separate or superior to ourselves. Rather, we are to see everyone as equal.

In summary, Peter, Paul, and Apollos all established house churches that held equal status. The foundation of the church is Christ, who died for us.

The Purpose of Elders and the Practice of Gift Sharing

It may be time to reconsider the leadership within your church; perhaps you should fire your pastor and encourage him to find a job instead of relying on funds meant for orphans and widows. When the church began, elders were not meant to sit around without working and living off offerings from the house church while everyone else took care of their families. Why would they do that? You might say a laborer is worthy of his wages, but the elder did not really do much. He did not deliver a sermon each week but instead sat in the living room like everyone else, speaking up only when heresy was being taught. His role was to safeguard the congregation from false teachings. If everything was running smoothly, he quietly allowed everyone else to participate in the church, exercising their gifts and edifying one another.

If you find yourself passively sitting in a pew, listening to only one person exercise their gift—and that gift is questionable and not even biblical—then the members of the church are having their gifts stifled. 1 Corinthians 12 asks, “Are we all the same member? Don’t we all have different gifts?” Yet, the modern institutional church often has only one gift: that of the orator or speaker who delivers lectures. These presentations may include one or two verses

but often consist of human interpretation rather than biblical teaching. It would be better to read the Scripture together without interpretation, taking turns reading a chapter, rather than listening to one person monopolize the time with their interpretations.

May God's grace and peace be with you.

In Jesus Christ's name. Amen.

Mr. David Michael Curtis

Fire Your Pastor, and Tell Him to Get a Job—Part 2

By David Michael Curtis

Based on the provided document "Fire Your Pastor, and Tell Him to Get a Job—Part 2.pdf" by David Michael Curtis, here's a summary of its key points:

- **Critique of Paid Pastors:** The document strongly advocates for firing pastors who are financially supported by church offerings. It argues that pastors should have regular jobs and not rely on church funds, which should be reserved for widows, orphans, and those truly in need.
- **Early Church Practices:** It asserts that early Christian house churches did not have paid pastors or formal sermons. Elders were not compensated and had secular jobs. Sermons became a common practice much later, around the fourth century.
- **Equality of Elders:** The author emphasizes that in the early church, there was no hierarchy among elders. They were all equal, and even the Apostle Paul did not claim authority over the faith of others.
- **Rejection of Hierarchical Structures:** The document criticizes the hierarchical structure of churches, such as the Roman Catholic Church, with positions including priests, bishops, cardinals, and the Pope. It argues that these structures are not based on biblical examples.
- **Authority of Scripture:** It emphasizes the importance of building faith in the Bible rather than in church fathers or later church traditions. The author points out contradictions among church fathers and within various denominations, advocating for adherence to the clear teachings of Scripture.
- **House Churches:** The document suggests establishing house churches with elders and deacons, where participation is expected from everyone, and offerings are used to support the needy and missionaries who teach the true gospel.
- **Financial Responsibility:** It emphasizes personal financial responsibility and discourages taking advantage of church offerings. It asserts that those who can work should do so and provide for themselves and their families.
- **Discernment and Separation:** The author encourages discernment regarding teachings and calls for separation from false prophets and teachings. It advises choosing elders who are skilled in teaching and guarding against heresy.
- **Gospel and Baptism:** The document defines the gospel as Christ's death for our sins, burial, and resurrection and emphasizes the importance of repentance and baptism for salvation.

In essence, the document argues for a return to what the author believes are the original practices of the early Christian church, with a focus on simplicity, equality, financial responsibility, and adherence to Scripture.

“In apostolic times, there was no distinction between bishops, elders, or presbyters (**Acts 20:17-28; 1 Peter 5:1-2; Philippians 1:1; 1 Timothy 3**). The term "bishop" is never used to denote a different office from that of elder or presbyter.” – **Easton's Bible Dictionary**

Dear Friends

Consider firing your pastor and encourage him to find a job instead of relying on funds meant for orphans and widows. If anyone in the church is walking disorderly and refuses to work, you should not fellowship with that person or share a meal with them. This is intended to make them feel ashamed and encourage them to find employment. According to the Apostle Paul, if someone refuses to work and support their family, they are worse than an infidel.

You are not obligated to provide compensation to a minister for preaching sermons. Elders in the early house churches did not deliver formal lectures or sermons. Additionally, the elders did not visit homes or spend time with their wives and children when the father was absent. Sermons did not become a common practice until the fourth century. Nonetheless, the practice of a wolf in sheep's clothing visiting homes during the man's absence was already in place when Paul composed his letters.

2 Timothy 3:5-6 Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away. For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts,

The elder was apt to teach, but this was not a compensated position. No financial assistance was offered to help elders cover their living expenses. Instead, offerings were intended to assist widows, orphans, and traveling evangelists, with deacons managing the distribution rather than a treasurer.

The Emergence of Monasticism and Clerical Authority

When looking into church history, we can trace various departures from the foundations laid by Christ and the apostles. One such departure involved a lifestyle characterized by a lack of stable income, leading individuals to resort to begging for money and food. Distinct groups formed, such as monks and friars, who adopted a form of godliness and vowed to live in poverty. This vow was essentially a commitment to disobedience to the teachings of the apostles, who instructed all men to work and take care of themselves and their families.

These monks became a burden on the peasants, who owned no land and were taxed by kings, landowners, and the church. Despite their struggles to feed themselves, they were expected to give even more to begging monks who refused to work for their bread. This practice created resentment among the peasants and misled them into believing that this was Christianity. They were taught that Christ and the apostles demanded that they labor

like slaves, giving all their earnings to landowners, the king, and the church—while also providing for begging monks.

This practice continues today, as some pastors expect payment for delivering a sermon just once a week. Instead of working a full-time job, they often spend only about an hour or two per week working.

The apostles identified as elders, indicating equality among themselves and with the elders in your church. They were not superior to others. In First Corinthians, the Apostle Paul states that he did not exercise authority over our faith. This was Paul speaking, and even as he wrote this letter, which holds authority, he did not have authority over their faith. He was an elder, just like every other elder, who were all equal. The Apostle Paul was subject to the principles he wrote about; he was not above them.

How do I know this? Read Galatians 1:8-9. Paul states that even if we or an angel teach a different gospel, it is to be condemned. If the Apostle Paul taught something contrary to the gospel based on his authority, it would be considered a curse. His writings are scripture, and we are subject to that scripture. It is inerrant and can withstand all criticism. It is to be obeyed, followed and believed.

What I am distinguishing is that Paul did not have an authority invested in him that allowed him to say whatever he pleased or teach whatever he wanted. He had to teach what Christ commanded him to convey. He was an apostle called by God through Jesus Christ, tasked with delivering the message that God gave him.

2 Corinthians 1:24 Not for that we have dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy: for by faith ye stand.

The notion that individuals were assigned to supervise various churches, to whom we are expected to yield, is something Paul himself never asserted. He highlighted that the apostles do not exercise authority over our faith. In the second and third centuries, overseers or bishops began to emerge, assuming roles that allowed them to collect offerings from multiple churches and insist that those congregations adhere to their teachings. This marked a shift away from the principles established by Christ and the Apostles. The core message is that we are called to turn away from sin, place our trust in God, and undergo baptism. As followers of Christ, we are meant to follow the Good Shepherd and avoid using terms like "Rabbi" or "Father" for anyone.

The Roman Catholic Church and Hierarchical Structures

Right across the street from where I am recording this is a Roman Catholic Church, where ministers are called priests and referred to as fathers. This directly violates Christ's

commandment not to call any man on Earth your father. That, by itself, signals to me that it is not Christian. Christianity is based on teaching obedience to what Christ commanded. He explicitly commanded us not to call any man on Earth father or rabbi and stated that Christ is our master and teacher. He is the head of the church, and we are all equal—whether we are apostles, elders, deacons, or simply individuals attending a house church. We all have one head: Christ.

In the Roman Catholic Church, there is a position known as Pontifex Maximus, one of the titles held by the Pope. This title, however, is not inherently Christian; in fact, there was no Pontifex Maximus during the time of the apostles. Even if such a position existed, it was not Peter who held it. The head of the Jerusalem Council was actually James, the brother of Christ. Therefore, if Peter became Pontifex Maximus after James was martyred, it would be too late for the church to be built on Peter as its foundation since James was the first leader of the Jerusalem Church, not Peter. Additionally, James was not referred to as Pontifex Maximus.

The office of Pontifex Maximus existed centuries before Christ established the church. In Roman religion, there was a high priest known as the Pontifex Maximus. This hierarchical structure, which included senators during the Republic, is reflected today in the Vatican, where we have a Pontifex Maximus (the Pope) and a Senate composed of Cardinals. Beneath the Cardinals are subordinate leaders called bishops, who oversee specific dioceses and their churches. Each church is required to pay a tax to the bishop, while one or more priests serve local churches.

This is a pyramid structure, and none of these offices existed in the house churches that Peter, Paul, and Apollos founded. In those house churches, there were simply elders and deacons; there was no overseer over multiple house churches. Such positions did not arise until the second century when these so-called Church Fathers began asserting authority and demanding taxes from various churches under their jurisdiction. These roles were artificial, not appointed by the apostles, as these bishops claimed their territories from which they taxed the churches below them.

By the 11th century, a significant event known as the Great Schism had occurred, dividing the Roman Catholic Church and the Eastern Orthodox Church. This schism was primarily caused by the Bishop of Rome claiming a position of authority over all other bishops, a claim that the Eastern Orthodox Church rejected. The origin of this tradition dates back to 606 AD when the Byzantine emperor bestowed the title of "overseer of all bishops" upon the Bishop of Rome. Four hundred years later, the Great Schism occurred when Eastern bishops refused to submit to the authority of the Roman bishop. In contrast, bishops in the West, now known as cardinals, acknowledged the authority of the Pope, also known as the Pontifex Maximus.

This is the history of the church, and it is not open for debate; these events truly occurred. Given this, we ought not only to fire the pastor but also to dismiss the priests, bishops, Cardinals, and the Pope, urging them to find legitimate employment and support themselves rather than residing in extravagant palaces built with the contributions of the poor, originally intended to assist widows and orphans.

Church Fathers and the Authority of Scripture

Throughout the history of the church, the authentic church is depicted as hidden in the wilderness, as mentioned in Revelation 12. When reading a church history book — and I have read several — keep in mind that you are examining a church that has its Church Fathers, bishops, Cardinals, and Pope. Meanwhile, the true church was concealed, living in caves and secretly traveling across Europe as missionaries, distributing scripture during times when possessing scripture in one's language was forbidden. Those caught doing so could face the Inquisition, torture, or even martyrdom at the hands of the institutional church described in history.

These men are referred to as Church Fathers because their influence began when they, like wolves in sheep's clothing, appeared in history, claiming authority over the faith and imposing taxes on local house churches, amassing wealth for themselves.

So, everyone who followed in their footsteps—calling themselves bishops, cardinals, and popes—rests their authority on the authority of the church fathers. It is a house of cards. The church fathers did not possess any true authority; they asserted authority, granted it to themselves, and aimed to make other men their disciples. We have a vast amount of their writing—some say it exceeds one million pages. Within these works, various discussions occur, and these church fathers often disagree with one another. They taught different doctrines and held contrasting beliefs.

The Roman Catholic Church claims that these writings are harmonious and promotes this idea in its schools, presenting selected quotes to its laypeople in churches. Roman Catholics are presented with a carefully curated set of quotes to create a false sense of unity within the Church Fathers' writings. In reality, they contradicted each other.

Dr. Martin Luther, at the Diet of Worms, pointed out that the church fathers, councils, and popes contradicted each other. Because of this, it is impossible to follow these men, as they all say different things, teach different doctrines and contradict one another. This is the state of things; it is the truth. Following the church fathers requires you to choose which one you will submit to, as they do not agree with each other.

Therefore, I encourage you to build your faith on the solid rock of the Bible. The Bible is in harmony; it is unified and can withstand the criticisms of the entire world.

If you are following authorities that emerged after the apostles wrote the New Testament, you are following false shepherds. Anyone who claims a position of authority over your faith is a false shepherd. I want to highlight the same obvious truth that Martin Luther pointed out at the Diet of Worms, but this time, I am directing it toward evangelicals.

If you say, "I am a Baptist," that does not convey much. Baptists disagree among themselves on nearly every aspect of doctrine taught within the Baptist Church. Claiming to be a Baptist does not clearly define your beliefs. There are Baptists who are Calvinists and those who reject Calvinism. There are Baptists who hold one view and others who contradict it across the entire spectrum of Baptist teaching.

Identifying as a Seventh-day Adventist doesn't accurately convey your beliefs to me. There are liberal Seventh-day Adventists who often disregard the traditional teachings of the church and hold differing views on salvation than the conservatives within the Adventist community. Some Seventh-day Adventists are quite evangelical, while others are more conservative and view the evangelical members as apostates.

Simply stating, "I am a Seventh-day Adventist," fails to clarify your beliefs. Some followers uphold the investigative judgment, while others have moved away from it. This distinction significantly alters the understanding of salvation between these two groups. So, do you align yourself with Ellen G. White's teachings or with a contemporary evangelist who has diverged from her principles? Do you believe that only vegan Sabbath keepers will receive God's seal during a Sunday law? Or do you find that notion absurd?

This same issue can be seen when someone claims to belong to any organized church. Each church contains vastly different beliefs within its ranks. This is the issue Martin Luther highlighted at the Diet of Worms. Which type of Roman Catholic are you? There are dozens of variations of Roman Catholicism, with sharp disagreements within them.

Martin Luther, at the Diet of Worms, stated that the church fathers, councils, and popes contradicted each other. I suggest that regardless of the church—be it Baptist, Seventh-Day Adventist, or any other denomination—there are contradictions in virtually every single doctrine, or at least in some core tenets of that faith. This means that you must choose which church fathers within your institutional church you wish to believe in and follow as disciples.

Departure from Biblical Church Patterns

What I am sharing today is not the pattern that was laid down at the foundation of the Church. We are not meant to be disciples of any man, nor should we refer to any man as our rabbi or father. I do not care what the church fathers wrote; they hold no significance for me. I do not read about church fathers in scripture; I read about apostles, prophets, evangelists,

and teachers, but not about church fathers who were bishops over regions of house churches. That office did not exist.

The priest conducting a mass did not exist, nor did a Senate or a group of Cardinals in the Vatican. These things are not found in scripture. Additionally, Peter was certainly not the head of the Jerusalem Church; that role belonged to James. The only thing the Council at Jerusalem commanded the Gentile churches was not to eat anything strangled or with blood and not to commit fornication. It was amazingly simple; they provided just a few instructions in Acts 15: if you eat meat, ensure that it has been properly bled, and do not commit fornication.

The Jerusalem Council and House Church Autonomy

That was all the instruction that James, Peter, and the apostles provided during the Jerusalem Council. They respected the autonomy of the house churches and refrained from imposing authority over their faith. They recognized that Christ was the head of the church, present among them and leading them. There was no need for a bishop, cardinal, or pope. Jesus was in their midst, and He was the head of the church, providing gifts through the Holy Spirit, which the church was to exercise during their gatherings in a house setting.

Participation should be expected from everyone, not just a single person giving a sermon. If your offerings support individuals who do not have jobs and are engaged in self-appointed work based on tradition—not outlined in Scripture, such as giving sermons or conducting masses—then these individuals should seek employment and provide for themselves. They are walking disorderly.

Establishing House Churches and Supporting Missionaries

I suggest starting a house church. Appoint a deacon to handle the offerings. Ensure that your deacon is trustworthy and can provide an account of every penny received. It is important to demonstrate that these offerings are being used for good works, such as helping widows and orphans within the church.

If you wish to support anyone laboring for the gospel, consider supporting missionaries. These are the individuals who were supported during the time the New Testament was written; we refer to them as missionaries today, while they were referred to as evangelists in the New Testament. They traveled from place to place to teach the gospel. Ensure that your missionary is teaching the true gospel: that Christ died for our sins according to Scripture, was buried, and rose again on the third day. Jesus' death atones for our sins, and to receive forgiveness, we must repent and be baptized. Be aware that there are missionaries who focus on teaching a different gospel. Do not send offerings to just anyone calling themselves a missionary. Learn about their principal foundational doctrines. Mormon missionaries

began an in-home visit by presenting an evangelical-like gospel, then shifted topics and became completely focused on Joseph Smith. There is a Calvinist missionary society that has thousands of missionaries who focus on indoctrinating with TULIP rather than the gospel.

The Gospel and Baptism

To be saved, one must hear the gospel, believe it, turn from their sins, trust God, and be baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Through this process, our sins are forgiven, and we are justified, sanctified, and washed in the name of Jesus and by the power of the Holy Spirit at the time of baptism. If you support a missionary, be sure this is the gospel he is teaching and that it is not merely an introduction to a complex religious system in order to join an institutional church.

New Testament Church Structure and Practices

After baptism, that person should be added to the church. The churches of the New Testament era were house churches, with the only officers being an elder and a deacon. The elder was responsible for guarding against heretics and ensuring that false teachers were not let into the house. The deacon was responsible for collecting offerings and distributing them to widows, orphans, and those in need during times of emergency. The elder and deacon did not keep any of the offerings for themselves. Only deceitful teachers claimed that the offerings were meant for their own use.

The contributions gathered and utilized for charitable purposes were regarded as the fruits of every individual, regardless of the amount they gave. Some enslaved individuals, despite being unable to provide monetary support, were equally considered as bearing fruit.

The early church was straightforward, and what we see in modern institutional churches often resembles a departure from that simplicity. Some individuals may claim to be apostles when, in fact, they are not. Likewise, institutions claim to be churches that are not the church—these are counterfeits.

Discernment and Separation from False Teachings

We are not here to judge or condemn; we will let Jesus sort it all out. There are true children of God within all these institutional churches who are unaware of the truths you have been learning. This is supported by the message "Come out of her, my people," which indicates that God has people inside Babylon. We are not condemning institutional churches or determining who is saved and who is lost. In some cases, both the saved and the lost will grow together until the harvest, at which point the angels will separate them.

If you understand these principles and have received the call to set yourself apart, you should follow Christ and establish a house church. Choose an elder who is skilled in

teaching, capable of recognizing heresies, and courageous enough to stand against them. A good shepherd will safeguard the congregation and address anyone spreading false teachings, informing them that they will not be accepted into the house again unless they cease their heretical teachings.

Moreover, appoint a deacon who can distribute offerings on a weekly basis, particularly to those in need within your house church. Encourage every man in your house church to have a job, to refrain from walking disorderly, and to take care of their own family and financial responsibilities.

Financial Responsibility and Protecting Against Heresy

It is essential not to be a burden to the church or to take advantage of offerings intended for those in need. Unfortunately, many institutional churches will not take this step, and they often continue to support pastors from funds intended for orphans and widows. A pastor in that situation should be ashamed for taking money that rightfully belongs to those who are vulnerable.

It is the duty of the elder, who occupies a role similar to that of a pastor, to safeguard the congregation from false teachings. But what should you do if your pastor turns out to be a heretic? Ultimately, you must trust in Christ for guidance, provided you adhere to His commandments. The Bible explicitly tells us not to sit under the teachings of false prophets or listen to their doctrines. We are cautioned to be mindful of their doctrines since even a small portion of leaven can leaven the entire batch of bread.

If you are part of a house church with a faithful elder, you will have someone watching over you to ensure that heresy does not creep in. If not, it becomes your responsibility to adhere to Christ's commandments. He is the Good Shepherd, and we should follow Him. We cannot make excuses for following a false prophet instead of Christ, regardless of how convinced we may be toward a pastor's sermons.

Personal Responsibility and Financial Integrity

If you are attending an institutional church where the pastor may be preaching heretical teachings, you have only yourself to blame for staying. No one is forcing you to attend that church; it is a choice you make willingly. Your attendance is not for God's sake; He commanded us not to listen to false prophets.

What if your pastor is faithful in his teachings but is living off the funds meant for widows and orphans? Even if his sermons are solid, if he is not supporting his own family by finding work, he is worse than an unbeliever. This practice resembles the vow of poverty taken by monks or friars. A pastor should not depend on the church funds but should work to provide for his own needs.

Offerings are intended to support widows, orphans, and those facing crises—much like those who were in need during the famine in Jerusalem. If you are giving your money to wealthy individuals instead of the needy, you are going against Christ's commandment to give to the poor. Scripture is clear: your contributions should not go to wealthy men but should instead help those in need.

May God's grace and peace be with you.

In Jesus Christ's name. Amen.

Mr. David Michael Curtis

Good Works in First Century House Churches

By David Michael Curtis

"Good Works in First-Century House Churches" by David Michael Curtis examines the practices of early Christian house churches and contrasts them with modern institutional churches, particularly in terms of financial offerings and community support.

Here's a breakdown of the key points from the document:

- **Early House Church Structure:** The document describes how early Christians gathered in homes for worship, shared meals (known as love feasts), read scripture, prayed, and made collective offerings. These offerings were used to support individuals in need within the community, including widows, orphans, and those facing hardship. There was a strong emphasis on mutual support and ensuring no one lacked necessities.
- **Financial Contributions:** Offerings were made based on each person's ability. Those with less gave modestly, while those with more helped cover shortfalls. These collected funds were used for acts of kindness and good works within the community. This is contrasted with the Old Testament practice of tithing, which the author argues was a tax specific to the Levitical priesthood and not applicable to modern Christians.
- **Community Support:** Early house churches operated as close-knit communities where members supported one another in times of need. This included providing for those who were sick, imprisoned, or otherwise unable to provide for themselves. The document emphasizes the love and support within these early communities.
- **Critique of Modern Institutional Churches:** David Michael Curtis critiques modern churches for often prioritizing building projects, mortgages, and staff salaries over serving the poor and the needy. He argues that offerings should primarily be used for charitable purposes and to support those in need rather than funding infrastructure or administrative costs.
- **Emphasis on Good Works:** The document emphasizes that the purpose of offerings in the early church was to perform good works, such as caring for widows, orphans, and the homeless. It contrasts this with modern churches that may focus more on maintaining buildings and programs.

- **House Churches as an Ideal:** The author advocates for a return to the house church model, where communities are more closely knit, and resources are directly utilized to support those in need. He suggests that this model aligns more closely with Christ's teachings on caring for the poor and the needy.
- **Paul's Example:** The document references Paul's example of working to support himself and encouraging others to do the same. It also mentions instances where Paul received support from certain churches while others neglected him in times of need.
- **False Prophets and Greed:** The author warns against greed and false prophets who preach for personal financial gain. He suggests that churches focused on maintaining buildings and paying large salaries may be neglecting their true purpose of serving the needy.

In essence, the document advocates for the idea that Christian communities should prioritize assisting those in need and that the house church model is a more effective means of achieving this than modern institutional churches.

Dear friends,

The Importance of Good Works and House Churches

In today's letter, we will discuss the importance of good works. I want to begin by emphasizing that if you are not part of a house church and are living on a low income, you are at a disadvantage when it comes to participating in good works.

The Ideal Structure of a House Church

Let me describe how things should ideally be within a house church. Believers gather together to break bread, remembering that Christ died for their sins, as recorded in Scripture. They edify and encourage one another, visit and converse, take turns reading Scripture, pray together, sing, and then share a meal, often referred to as the love feast.

Financial Contributions and Collective Good Works

Everyone who attends the house church contributes an offering, as the Lord had prospered them. Those on low incomes can give modestly, like the widow who could only afford to contribute two mites, while others who are wealthier can help cover any shortfall. Together, the collective funds gathered from everyone in the house church are used to perform acts of kindness and good works.

Biblical Examples of Collective Offerings

This practice is illustrated in the Bible, where Paul collected offerings during a famine in Jerusalem to help the church that was suffering from the crisis. This collection took place on the first day of the week when everyone would set aside an offering as God had prospered them. When they gathered together in a house, they would present their offerings, which were always used for good works, ensuring that no one faced lack and everyone had what they needed.

Community Support and Love in Early House Churches

In a functioning house church, individuals didn't have to worry about emergencies or crises. The house church community supported one another, ensuring that no one went hungry or faced difficulties alone. Jesus said, "You will know them by their love for one another," and that love was evident in the house churches that the apostles started.

Diversity and Equality in Early Church Gatherings

These gatherings were diverse, consisting of both poor and wealthy individuals, but it didn't matter who was who. Everyone gave according to their means, which meant no one lacked anything. When there was an abundance, that surplus was used to help other house churches in need due to troubles like famine.

Contrasting Modern Institutional Church Practices

In contrast, modern practices in institutional churches often leave individuals to fend for themselves. Each person is responsible for facing their crises. If you are wealthy, the focus may shift to accumulating more possessions or saving for retirement while still managing your challenges alone.

Early Church Community and Support for the Needy

In the early church, however, everyone was part of a community—a family where no one lacked what they needed. Many early church members were slaves who had no income, and their masters often failed to provide for even their basic needs. Jesus taught that if you have two shirts, you should give one to someone who has none, illustrating the necessity of supporting one another. Wealthy Christians in the early church would help their fellow believers, including slave Christians, fulfill their needs through community offerings collected on the first day of the week in the house church.

Collective Contribution and Recognition in House Churches

The good deeds of the house church were attributed to all its members, which meant that everyone, regardless of their income, was seen as contributing to the work of good. The church functioned as a single community—a body of believers where everyone was recognized for their collective good works.

The Purpose of Weekly Offerings in Early Churches

The weekly offerings collected were primarily used to support widows who had lost their husbands and had no earthly support, as well as orphans—the fatherless children who lacked anyone to care for them. The primary purpose of the weekly offering in the house church was to take place on the first day of the week. It aimed to care for widows, orphans, and anyone within the church who had needs.

Paul's Example and Encouragement to Work and Provide

Paul set an example by working to earn his living and consistently encouraged the men in the house churches to follow his lead. He advised them to work and provide for themselves, urging even those who had previously been involved in theft to find employment so that they could contribute to others.

Contrasting Modern Church Spending Practices

In contrast, let's examine current practices in institutional churches. For instance, Calvary Baptist Church in Arcadia, FL, recently sold a large plot of land to the Wawa Gas Company, which constructed a gas station on Highway 70. The church used the money from this sale to construct a large parking lot and new buildings, which are currently under construction.

This is where the weekly offerings are being directed—towards parking lots, buildings, and church programs.

Wealth, Offerings, and Neglect of the Needy

In another case, a Baptist family here owns the largest house in DeSoto County, along with a significant amount of land. Their wealth was given to them through offerings made to a local, independent Baptist Church. These offerings are directed towards paying off the church mortgage, meeting legally required insurance, funding various church programs, covering utility bills, and supporting the pastor and his family, allowing them to live in luxury. They purchased the land about three years ago and have since built a massive home.

The Reality of Homelessness and Neglect

Meanwhile, there are homeless people in Arcadia who are being neglected. They are living in dirty clothes and lack even necessities, such as water. One homeless man told me, "If you have water, you have everything. If you have no water, you have nothing." He truly understands the hardship of going without essential resources. Yet, the affluent Baptist family continues to live in complete comfort, largely supported by offerings collected at the church.

Tithing: Old Testament vs. New Testament

Many churches teach that one must tithe. But is tithing biblical? It depends on whether you reference the Old Testament or the New Testament. In the Old Testament, Abraham gave a tithe to Melchizedek after the War of the Kings as a form of tax. After the Mount Sinai Covenant was established, the twelve tribes of Israel were given land. At the same time, the Levites were set apart for service in the sanctuary and did not receive an inheritance of land. The other tribes were required to pay a tithe—10% of their harvest—to support the Levitical priests.

Tithing in the Modern Context

Since 70 AD, there has been no temple in Jerusalem, no Levitical priests, and no tribe of Levi to whom one can pay a tithe. The tithe served as a tax intended to fund the Levitical priests. The absence of Levitical priests indicates that no tax is owed to them. Furthermore, only Israelites were obligated to pay the temple tax.

Free Offerings vs. Tithing in Early Christianity

A minister is not a Levite priest—we are not one of the tribes of Israel. Therefore, we are not required to give a tithe of our income to them. This practice was part of the old covenant. In modern times, since the founding of the church, Christians have continued to gather in homes for worship. Instead of a tithe, they gave free offerings. These offerings were not used to buy land, build parking lots, pay for cathedral mortgages, or cover insurance costs.

Instead, they were used to support widows, orphans, and slaves who had no income. The money helped with good works, providing food, clothing, and essentials for those in prison.

Support for Imprisoned Believers in Early Christianity

In the first century, if someone was imprisoned, the prison did not provide for their daily needs. If friends or family did not supply food, the prisoner would go hungry. The Roman government offered no food to those incarcerated. The Apostle Paul often found himself in prison, and of all the churches he founded, the only one that sent him an offering to help feed him was the Philippian church. The others refused to help him. In one of his letters, Paul mentioned needing a coat that he had left behind at one of the house churches, highlighting that he was cold in prison. Likewise, William Tyndale, in the 16th century, wrote from prison that he was in need of a coat and was constantly cold. The church in Corinth—a wealthy congregation—neglected to visit Paul or send money for food or even a coat. The Philippians, however, came to his aid by sending someone with money to help him.

The True Purpose of Offerings

This is what offerings were meant for: to do good deeds, not to build parking lots, buildings, or luxurious houses for ministers. If you are not part of a house church and are living in a low-income situation, you may feel limited in your ability to do good work. I can relate to this struggle. I want to contribute positively, but I have to find creative ways to do so because I lack a community of others to share in funding good deeds.

Modern Church Buildings and Neglect of the Poor

Here in Arcadia, countless church buildings sit mostly empty every Sunday. Some may gather a dozen people at most, and they do give offerings—perhaps they consider these to be tithes. However, that money is typically used to pay mortgage loans, cover insurance, and replace roofs, leaving the church largely inactive in its support of the poor in DeSoto County. Imagine if all of these church buildings were sold and the proceeds were used to help the poor in our community. There would be sufficient funds to provide housing for every homeless person in this area. Which do you think aligns more with Christ's teachings: giving to support a building or using offerings to help widows, orphans, and the homeless?

Complicity in False Doctrine and Church Buildings

If you are attending an institutional church and giving your offerings, believing they are tithes, but the minister is delivering flawed teachings, you become complicit in that false doctrine. If he is teaching another gospel or promoting another Jesus, and you support him financially, you share in his errors. Contributing money to support a church building—what some refer to as the House of God—is rooted in an Old Testament concept. The House of God was the temple in Jerusalem, and a tax was collected specifically for it. A church building today is not

the House of God. You can gather with others in your home. There is no need for a large building, a bank loan, special insurance, or parking lots.

Financial Resources and Supporting Ministry

It's important to evaluate how we allocate our financial resources within the church. While we shouldn't feel pressured to give excessive amounts of money to a pastor so he can purchase a large piece of land and build an extravagant house for his family, we also need to recognize the significance of supporting the ministry. After all, a laborer is worthy of his hire.

The Proper Use of Church Funds

However, the funds contributed shouldn't primarily enrich a 'pastor.' Instead, they should facilitate the spread of the gospel through the work of evangelists. Those who traveled received financial support, while elders who were stationary in the same city did not receive large sums of money. It's essential to note that the terms 'elder,' 'bishop,' and 'pastor' refer to the same office.

The elder, bishop, or pastor was required to work and make an income just like any other church member. The donations were not meant to provide the pastor with a salary or help with his home loan. It was anticipated that the pastor would be employed and support himself, just as all other members did.

Contributions were intended to assist traveling evangelists or those who had been imprisoned. However, anyone residing in a particular town and attending a single church was expected to be employed and provide for themselves. The donations were intended for widows and orphaned children, not for men who were capable of working and supporting themselves, like a pastor.

The Original Purpose of Offerings

In certain denominations, such as Eastern Orthodoxy and Roman Catholicism, bishops often reside in mansions or palaces. However, that is not the purpose for which offerings were intended. Offerings were intended to support essential needs—helping widows, orphans, and those lacking necessities such as clothing and food. Jesus specifically taught us to visit the sick and those in prison and to provide for them.

Collective Fruit Bearing Through Good Works

The purpose of the offerings was to do good works. In early house churches, regardless of a person's financial status—whether they were slaves or wealthy contributors—everyone was considered to be bearing fruit in God's eyes. Paul wrote to one house church, encouraging them to assist him during his imprisonment, stating that this would allow them to bear fruit.

Communal Support and Self-Sufficiency

When offerings are utilized to support people in need—such as widows, orphans, and people experiencing homelessness—that is truly bearing fruit. This was a communal effort, taking place on the first day of the week when the church would gather in a home to collect offerings. These offerings were intended to ensure that no one went without, especially in times of emergency. The church was self-sufficient, providing for its members without relying on the Roman government for support. There was no social safety net. If the church did not support widows, they would go hungry.

Modern Churches and Neglect of Community Needs

In contrast, many modern churches often collect tithes and offerings that primarily serve to maintain buildings, pay off mortgages, or fund church programs. Meanwhile, the poor and needy in the community are overlooked. The church building may be thriving, but the homeless are still going hungry and lack basic resources like water and shelter. It's a troubling reality that while we dress in our best clothes and attend beautiful church buildings, we might be neglecting those in real need, much like the church in Corinth ignored Paul while he was imprisoned.

Independent Churches and Potential for Greed

Many evangelical churches are independent and do not report to a larger governing body. This autonomy means that all incoming contributions remain within that local church. If a minister operates in an independent church with a modest congregation, they may benefit significantly from the tithes collected.

Signs of False Prophets and Proper Use of Church Funds

One sign of a false prophet is the motivation of greed—preaching for selfish financial gain. Suppose an institutional church does not share its resources beyond its walls and is solely focused on maintaining its physical structure, paying for insurance, and covering the salaries of its pastors. In that case, it can lead to a pastor and their family living comfortably, potentially even owning the largest house in the county. The Port Charlotte Independent Baptist church has only a couple hundred families attending, and their collective tithe has helped its minister essentially build a mansion for his family.

Advocating for House Churches and Collective Good Works

I suggest that we meet in houses and collect offerings, using those offerings to perform good works. The good deeds carried out by the house church should be ascribed to everyone in the group, whether they contributed just two mites, like the widow at the temple, or thousands of dollars. In heaven's eyes, everyone is considered to be producing good fruit by

doing good, loving one another, visiting the sick, visiting those in prison, and caring for one another.

The Benefits of House Church Community

Imagine having a house church where you didn't need a retirement fund. When the time came, and you were no longer able to work, your house church would ensure all your needs were met. Picture having 30 or 35 people gathering in a home each week. For years, you supported the poor within your house church, and then, when you grew older and could no longer work, your house church would be there for you, taking care of your needs.

Living Without Worry in a House Church

What if you could live out the teachings of Jesus Christ without worrying about tomorrow? What if you didn't need to store up treasures on Earth for retirement? Instead of building bigger barns to hoard wealth for retirement, you could truly follow Christ's teachings, trusting that you wouldn't need to accumulate material wealth.

The House Church as the Ideal Model

I propose that the only way to fulfill Christ's commandments regarding money is through a house church. In an institutional church, it is every man for himself. The poor and the wealthy are left to fend for themselves; they are told they need bigger barns and to invest in the stock market for retirement.

Practical Application of House Church Principles

Let me explain how this works:

First, we follow Christ's commandment to sell all that we have and give it to the poor. Yes, this commandment is to be taken seriously, just as the early church did. Next, Paul taught that every man in the house church should have a job and take care of his household, as well as his widows. He stated that anyone who does not work should not eat. If a member of the house church refuses to work, the church should let him go hungry to encourage him to find a job.

Roles and Responsibilities in the House Church

Thus, every man is expected to have a job to support his family, including extended family members such as widows. Once he is supported, he should give offerings to the church in accordance with how God has prospered him. Some may prosper and be able to give more, while others, such as slaves with no income, may not be able to contribute financially. However, the house church would still meet the needs of those individuals so they would not go hungry; they might be working, but they weren't getting paid for their labor.

Common Sense and Community Living in Early Churches

The early church employed common sense—every person was to work, take care of their family, and live in their own home. They met from house to house, indicating that even those who had sold their houses and lands still had a place to live. They were not practicing communal living; everyone owned their own houses and had their jobs. When they gathered in a house, they were the church. The term "church" refers to the group of people who assemble, not the building itself.

The Purpose of Abundance in House Church Gatherings

As God prospered them, the abundance collected each week during the house church meetings was used for good works, with a priority on supporting widows and orphans.

Contrast modern giving practices: instead of using offerings exclusively for people with low incomes to do good works, the collected money is deposited into the minister's bank account, which in some cases may already contain millions of dollars.

May God's grace and peace be with you.

In Jesus Christ's name. Amen.

Mr. David Michael Curtis